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IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS FOR THE TIMES.

No. 1.

ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

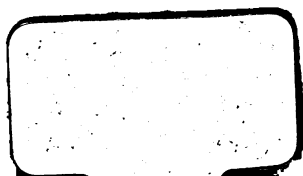
BY

JOHN CONYNGHAM MCCAUSLAND, M.A.

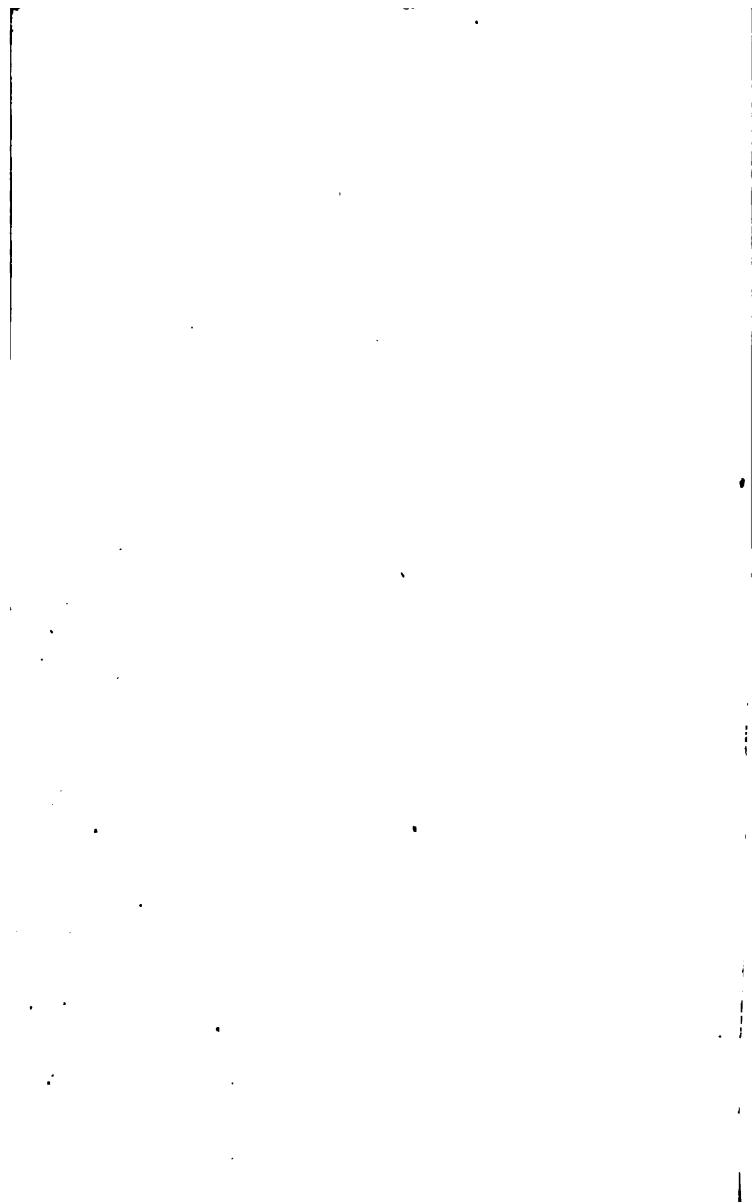
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TRUTHS FOR THE TIMES.

The Intermediate State.

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TRUTHS FOR THE TIMES.

No. I.

ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

BY

JOHN CONYNGHAM M'CAUSLAND, M.A.,

RECTOR OF CLONMORE.

"The dead know not *any* thing."—ECCLES. ix. 5.



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PREFACE.

THE design of the series of Essays, of which this forms the first, is to contribute, if possible, towards the removal of impediments to the comprehension of the Word of God, entailed by the admission of erroneous notions, on subjects on which the plain teaching of that Word has been supplanted by the "traditions of men." The Scriptures, when permitted to speak for themselves, will ever be found to furnish the easiest and simplest solutions of almost all the difficulties by which the study of them is otherwise necessarily beset. And it is trusted that the object of these essays may be attained, in the elucidation, in some measure, of the truth, by means of the suggestion of more Scriptural views of their several subjects, than generally prevail. It is an old device of the enemy of all truth, to represent the subjects in question as being of no importance, and therefore to be safely neglected. But, for what have they been

revealed? Has God made known to us, in His Word, any thing which He did not intend for our use? If "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," as the Apostle tells Timothy, then we may rest assured, that *no* portion of it can be unimportant, or with safety neglected. It has all been revealed to our faith, and we are responsible for the reception of it. But, besides its being our bounden duty to receive whatever God has been pleased to reveal in His Word, the neglect of any portion of it, which *we* may think (no matter from what cause) unimportant, will assuredly carry with it, even now, its own punishment, in the difficulties which its omission cannot but create in the understanding of such parts of it as we *do* consider deserving our attention. For, the whole of Scripture is one—the connected expression of the mind of God, so far as it has pleased Him to make it known to man—and has been likened to a chain, to the constitution of which *each* link is indispensable, as otherwise its continuity would be broken, and it would no longer be a chain at all, but *two* chains. So it is, indeed, in this case. If we omit, from any cause, or on any ground, what *we* may deem even an infinitesimally small link, from the great chain of revealed truth, we are sure to suffer the just judicial penalty of our presumption, in the increased obscurity with which we thus invest the portions of the Word which we desire to understand,

thinking them more important. As there are no little sins, so there are no little truths.

Believing the recognition of the doctrines which from the respective subjects of the Series of Essays here commenced, to be of indispensable necessity to the due knowledge of the whole revealed truth of God, which cannot otherwise, he conceives, be fully understood—the writer commends to His blessing whatever they may contain in accordance with His will, and prays that He may render them the means of promoting the object for which they have been undertaken, in the removal of, at least, some of the existing obstacles to the understanding of the Word. With regard to the execution of his part, he would adopt the language of another and say, “If he have done well, and as is fitting the subject, it is that which he desired; but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which he could attain to.”

He has only to add here, that the present Essay shall, “if the Lord will,” be followed by others on the subjects annexed—viz., “The First Resurrection,”—“The Pre-millennial Personal Advent and Reign of the Redeemer,”—“The Kingdom of God,”—“The Signs of the Times,”—“Our Whereabouts in the Present Dispensation,” &c.,—all of which subjects will be found, when Scripturally entertained, most important as exponents of the Word of God. The fact that the present Dispensation is fast approaching its predicted termina-

tion—that it has all but run out—and that the recognition of these several subjects, in their Scriptural import, would tend to the explanation of much that it interests the believer to know, and for the attainment of the knowledge of which so little time is now left—suggested the Title adopted for the Series—“Truths for the Times.”

CLONMORE RECTORY, DUNLEER,

February 14, 1860.

ON
THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

THE subject of the condition of departed believers, in the interval between their death and resurrection, is one of much more importance than is generally supposed—in fact, anything but what it is so often represented to be, viz., a visionary and unprofitable speculation—being, on the contrary, most intimately connected with the Faith and Hope of the Church. Indeed, were it not so, in the most practical sense, it never should have been so honoured, as it has been, by the opposition of the “enemy of all righteousness,” who knows (if we do not) the importance and value of the truth respecting it, or he never would have taken such pains to depreciate it, and cry it down. And the philosophy of his opposition to it is easily understood, inasmuch as he has found his account in its perversion, which has formed the basis on which alone he could have succeeded in erecting the superstructure of some of his most glaring contradictions of revealed truth, as shall

be shewn below. Nor will any effort to counteract his falsehoods, in the cases alluded to, be effectual, that is not grounded on the recognition of the doctrine of Scripture on this subject.*

Were the announcements of the Word of God, respecting it, in any way dubious, or uncertain, there had been less room for wonder at the present state of opinion on the subject—but, so far is this from being the fact, that on no other point is the teaching of that Word more distinctly intelligible than on this. It might well furnish matter of astonishment, that such exceedingly plain truth should have ever been lost sight of, and such palpable fallacies and inconsistencies have been substituted for it, could we not account for it as above.

It is no wonder that, with the now prevalent views of *this* subject, so much difficulty is found in so many otherwise plain portions of the Word, which it is impossible to understand, consistently with such notions; whereas, viewed in the light of the various statements of Scripture respecting *it*, a child might understand them.

* The personality and present power of Satan seem to be very much lost sight of in the present day, though plainly declared in Scripture, which always represents him as being now at large, as "Prince of the power of the air"—while the current tradition has him now bound in Hell, into which he is to be cast at a time yet future, according to the testimony of all Scripture. People are thus put off their guard against his wiles, and led captive by him at his will.—See, on this subject, generally a very valuable lecture delivered to a Society in Cork, a few months since, by the Rev. — Chester, Vicar of Ballyclough, Mallow—and an Essay by Mr. Maitland, of Gloucester, on the same subject.

It is with much diffidence in his ability to do justice to the subject, though with every confidence in the Scriptural character of his views upon it, that the writer ventures to put them forward; knowing, as he does, how generally the opposite opinions are entertained; and, among others, by very many of his fathers and brethren in the ministry, at whose feet he would, generally speaking, deem it a privilege to sit and learn. He once believed as they now do, on the point; and it was not till after patient and careful investigation of the declarations of the Word respecting it, that he necessarily adopted his present views, in deference to its authority; and he feels himself bound to add, that his experience is that of all who have taken the same course—in that he has found the recognition of the truth in question, as plainly revealed in that Word, the means of removing many difficulties otherwise insurmountable, in the study of the Bible; and furnishing the only reply to more than one of the most dangerous errors by which the truth has been overlaid.

The now-common (though once unknown) opinion on this subject, has perhaps met the more ready credence, and comparatively uninquiring, and implicit acquiescence, because of its finding a willing response in the human breast, in its not unnatural anxiety about the departed objects of its affection—

“Quod volumus facile credimus”—

“The wish is father to the thought.”

Had we no revelation bearing on the point—or even nothing in the Word incompatible with the current and

popular tradition respecting it—the indulgence of the natural feelings in question were a comparatively harmless thing, though the issue would shew that it had been unfounded. But, when that Word is not only not silent on the subject, but most explicit in its statements respecting it—directly teaching a doctrine at variance with the popular one—it surely cannot be a matter of no moment, which side of the question we adopt. Whatever reluctance we may now feel, to relinquish our long-cherished opinions in connexion with it; and how “cold and repulsive”* soever may appear to us the opposite views; yet, if they be, as we maintain, most plainly revealed, we may safely believe that to this, as well as to other subjects, can properly be applied the question—“Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?” His arrangements in this, as in all other cases, shall eventually be acknowledged by all His people, to have been

* These are the very terms usually applied to the true Scripture doctrine on the subject before us. In far better days than the Church has now fallen upon, it was *universally* received, and found neither cold nor repulsive. But the Church of the present day differs from that of primitive times, in more respects than this; and generally contrasts unfavourably with it, notwithstanding the prevalent vain-glorious boastings of our imagined superiority. They were satisfied, in those days, with the plain statements of the Word of God, unendorsed by human authority, whether of bodies, or of individuals—thinking, as has been said of Cyprian, that they had “sufficiently proved their point, when they had supported it by an apposite quotation, their humble spirit bowing to the Divine Word”—“never trifling with Scripture, or setting up their reason against it, but with plain good sense taking always its words in their obvious and most natural meaning.”

such as were most conducive to their good, and His own glory. *We* are by no means capable of judging of the fitness of things, in such cases. He, and He alone, is. His Word must, therefore, be our standard, if we would honour him. "To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. viii. 20.)

The advocacy of any revealed truth which does not possess the sanction of public opinion, or is not endorsed by high names in the Church, is pretty sure to bring down upon the advocate the free, and not very generous or charitable, imputation of Heresy; and in the case before us, it is very common to endeavour to brand those who deviate from the beaten track, as abettors of Socinianism, &c.—but these things move us not, nor affect us in the slightest degree. Hard names and arguments are very different things. The free use of the former generally betrays a lack of the latter; and we can afford to condone the one, in consideration of the concession to the truth furnished by the absence of the other. The writer's sole object being to promote the knowledge of what he believes to be the truth on this subject, he trusts that, in the observations he may be enabled to offer upon it, he may be preserved from giving expression to any idea inconsistent with the plain and intelligible teaching of the Word respecting it, or inferences obviously deducible therefrom. And, should his humble efforts be, under the Divine blessing, the means of leading others to the knowledge of a truth, which he has found such a help to the understanding of Scripture, in

his own case, he will have been amply compensated for any odium he may incur, by his endeavour to draw attention to a long forgotten, unpopular, but most important doctrine of the Word of God. He can adopt the language of the late Mr. Cuninghame, of Lainshaw, in his Tract entitled "The Pre-millennial Advent of Messiah demonstrated from Scripture,"—and say, "He loves the approbation of his Christian brethren, but he loves more the approbation of his Lord and Master, who has warned him of the danger of hiding even his one talent, from a sinful fear of the frowns and displeasure of his fellow-men."

With these preliminary observations, he addresses himself to the question of the Intermediate state—and proposes, in the first place, to consider the prevailing opinions respecting it—to test them by the standard of the Word—and then to submit his own views of the subject to the same test; that the respective systems may be judged by this only legitimate criterion—the truth be distinguished from the error—and each be assigned "to its own place." "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."

He conceives that he states simply what they themselves will acknowledge to be the case, when he ascribes to those who hold the opinions now commonly entertained on this subject, the belief that, during the period between death and the resurrection, they who have departed this life in the faith of the Gospel, enjoy

a sort of *partial* blessedness, in the presence of the Redeemer, which shall be *perfected* at the resurrection, when the body shall have been raised from the grave, and made "like unto His glorious body"—and the whole man, "spirit, and soul, and body,"* shall have been invested with immortality and glory. His intention is to fairly and fully represent the opinions in question, and he trusts he has succeeded in doing so, in the statement he has just made. He is, at least, not aware of any omission, or exaggeration, in thus putting it.

And now, as to the alleged Scriptural authority for this view of the subject, he can truly affirm, that he has never heard more than *two* texts of the Word of God adduced in its favour. He does not, of course, mean to say, that *one* plain, decided, and positive statement of that Word is not sufficient warrant for belief of a doctrine absolutely and unequivocally laid down therein. Any thing thus plainly revealed, even in a single text, is binding on our faith, and admits of no question; but, at the same time, will always be found in harmony with the general tenor of the Word. There can be no such thing as collision, or clashing, in the teachings of that Word on any subject. Anything like contradictory, or conflicting statements of Scripture must necessarily be only apparently so, as God cannot be the author of contradiction, or confusion; and any difficulty experienced in this way can be easily met, by the use of the well-known canon of the Analogy of Faith. If, for

* (1 Thess. v. 23.)

example, *one* or *two* texts of Scripture seem, *prima facie*, to contradict the *general* teaching of the Word, on any particular subject, *they* are not to be erected into a *standard* of truth, whereby to test the *general* teaching of the Word respecting it; but just the reverse must, in all justice, and consistency, be the course pursued. The *general* teaching of the Word must be made the standard, to which must be referred, as to a test, the apparently opposite statements of the *one* or *two* texts, which some means must be sought of reconciling with *it*—a process not generally beset by much difficulty, where there is an honest desire to succeed. There is no rule better established, or more generally recognised and acted upon, than this. And it is one which will be found peculiarly applicable to the case before us—the doctrine of the intermediate state,—respecting which the general doctrine of Scripture is abundant, as it is plain, in support of the views maintained in this treatise; but, the *two* texts already alluded to, seeming, at first sight, to favour the popular tradition on the subject, are *therefore* eagerly laid hold of by its advocates, as in their opinion furnishing Scriptural evidence of its truth—while the *general* teaching of the Word respecting it is as completely *ignored*, as if it did not exist at all—though pervading the *whole* Bible, and indispensable to its being understood, in many of its most important passages.

One of the texts relied on by the advocates of the common notion is to be found in 2 Cor. v. 8, and reads thus—“To be absent from the body, and to be present

with the Lord." Now, the first observation that occurs to the writer to make here is, to express his astonishment, that the whole scope of the Apostle's exceedingly plain argument, in this beautiful passage, should have ever been so totally misapprehended, as it has evidently been by so many. It is a curious fact, that notwithstanding the now-common, (indeed, almost universal) application of this place to the intermediate state, *it has no reference whatever to it*; nor to any supposed condition of soul, or spirit, or both, in the interval between death and resurrection; but exclusively, (and that manifestly so) to the present *body* of flesh and blood, as contrasted with the future spiritual and glorified *body* of the resurrection. There is not the slightest or most remote hint, even, in the whole passage, (commencing with verse 17 of preceding chapter, and ending with v. 8 of that before us,) of anything relating to, or connected with, the intermediate state. The assertion to the contrary is wholly gratuitous. It is surely passing strange, that a Scripture which not only says not one word on the subject, but actually avows a totally different object, and goes even farther still, in *specially* disclaiming the intermediate condition as its subject, should yet be claimed as authority for the opinions which now prevail respecting that condition.

Let us only consider the Apostle's argument for a moment, and we shall find his meaning plain enough. Having just spoken of the present trials of the believer, he would console him, by holding out to him the one object ever set before the people of God in the Word,

as that in the contemplation of which they should find comfort in all their tribulation—viz., the Resurrection, and its glorious accompaniments. It is quite true, that *men* have substituted *another* object for that uniformly held out in the Gospel; but it is equally true that *no* other hope, than that which is connected with the Resurrection, is known to the Word of God. *All* the believer's hopes for eternity are indissolubly linked to that event. *No* immortality till the Resurrection—*no* eternal life till the Resurrection—*no* glory till the Resurrection—*no* conscious blessedness, or presence, with Christ, in any sense, or degree, till the Resurrection. Unmistakably plain on this point is the testimony of the Word of God every where, but no where more so than in the passage before us. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Now, before we go farther, let us just remark, that the "things not seen," and "eternal," are necessarily the things connected with the Resurrection—for the intermediate state, and its accompaniments, are never in Scripture set forth as the objects of hope, and desire, to the believer, but just the reverse;* nor shall they be "eternal," as all will allow. The "unseen things" here, then, cannot possibly refer to that condition, whatever it be. But the

* (*E. g.*) "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades," &c.

language which we see to be thus inapplicable to that state, is truly and exactly descriptive of the Resurrection-hope, which we shall see, as we proceed, is the Apostle's *avowed* subject, throughout the entire passage; as he shews clearly by the introduction of that hope, in the verses immediately succeeding that which we have just been considering.

"*For*," says he, "we know that, if our earthly house "of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building "of God, an house not made with hands, eternal, in "the heavens.* For in this (present tabernacle of flesh "and blood) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed "upon with our house which is *from heaven*, (the glorified and "spiritual body" of the Resurrection,) if so "be, that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked, "(i. e. if indeed, we shall be found clothed, and not "naked,) for, we that are in this tabernacle do groan, "being burdened: *not* for that we *would* be (*θελομεν*)

* This is one of the passages on which has been built the idea of the believer being translated to *Heaven*—whereas the real meaning of the place is shewn in 1 Pet. i. 4, 5, where we are told that the inheritance of the saints is now "*reserved* in Heaven" for them; not that they may be taken thither to enjoy it, but that it may be, as he tells us, "*revealed* in the *last time*"—(v. 5) and, according to v. 13, "be *brought unto* us, at the *revelation* of Jesus Christ." Just as our better attire is "*reserved*" in a ward-robe, to be "*brought*" thence, for occasional use, not to be worn there. In like manner, the "*New Jerusalem*" is seen by John, in the vision shewn him, "*coming down, from God, out of Heaven*," after which "the Tabernacle of God" shall be "*with men*"—not men going up, to God, into Heaven, and the tabernacle of men being thenceforth with God.

“unclothed, but *clothed upon*, that (*iva, in order that,*) “*mortality* may be swallowed up of *life*.” There is no mistaking such exceedingly plain language as this. One might almost assume, that the Apostle, in employing it, must have had in his mind a *presentiment* of the now-common opinions respecting the Intermediate state, and had set himself to confute them by anticipation. Let us just analyse his argument.

Having referred them to the fact, that believers, while in the body of flesh and blood, “groan, being burdened” with the sorrowful effects of sin—he would console them, under their trials, by directing their attention to the period which shall, according to the uniform testimony of Scripture, be that of their deliverance therefrom. And, lest they should fall into the error now so prevalent, of looking for the promised relief to the Intermediate, or pro-resurrection state, he specially guards against such misapprehension of his argument, by saying, in the words already quoted—“not for that we *would* be (*θελουμεν, wish, or desire, to be*) unclothed,” *i. e.* not that I mean that the “unclothed” state (when the clothing—the present body of flesh and blood—is lying in the grave) is the proper object of hope, as that which brings the “earnestly desired” deliverance. In fact, it would seem that he was in this place anticipating the now-common error on the subject, and, in a parenthesis, cautioning them *against* admitting such a notion as that any state preceding the Resurrection was the subject of his observations, or the object on which his “earnest desires”

were fixed. And then, having told them that he did *not* desire that condition, which he knew could not possibly bring the relief so anxiously longed for—and guarded them against the mistake that death should immediately introduce them to the object of their “earnest desire”—he goes on to tell them what *was* the proper object of expectation, viz., the Resurrection, and its accompaniments. “Not,” saith he, “for that we would be *unclothed*, but *clothed upon*, that (*iva*, in order that,) *mortality* may be swallowed up of *life*”—i. e. that by the process of putting on the “spiritual body” of the Resurrection, “mortality” may give way to immortality, and temporal death to eternal life. How could he more plainly have said, that till that process take place, mortality reigns, and immortality is unknown? If the putting on of the *Resurrection-body* be (as this place, in agreement with all Scripture, declares) necessary to the attainment of *immortality*—if that body is to be put on, “in order that (*iva*) mortality may be swallowed up of life,” must not, then, mortality have dominion over man, *till* that change take place, and eternal life be *then* entered upon?

What the Apostle here calls “mortality swallowed up of life”—he elsewhere (1 Cor. xv. 54) calls “death swallowed up in victory”—the whole context, in the latter case, connecting the subject of his remarks with the Resurrection of the believer; which is, indeed, his topic throughout the whole chapter—as it could not be said of the body of the unbeliever, that it is “sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption”—“sown in

dishonour, it is raised in glory," &c. The necessity of Resurrection, as the *only* way to life and immortality, in the case of such believers as shall have died before that event takes place, is most plainly asserted in vv. 53, 54—"So, *when* this *corruptible* shall have put on *incorruption*, and this *mortal* shall have put on *immortality*," &c.

Now, if the common opinion, as to supposed partial blessedness, in the presence of the Lord, during the interval between death and the resurrection, were well-founded, how could the Apostle have said, as he here does, that he did *not* desire that state? Paul not desire to be with Christ!* Impossible—that he whose writings are so full of the longings and yearnings of his heart for the *coming* of the Lord, that he *might* be with Him for ever, should have so expressed himself of a state in which was to be enjoyed even a partial and imperfect fruition of his presence. The *negative* argument, in favour of the views here maintained, derived from the Apostle's silence, in the first instance, as to any hope connected with the intermediate condition, is thus, we see, strengthened, even to demonstration, by his *positive disclaimer* of any such expectation—"not that we *would* be unclothed," &c.

If, then, this be so, we would ask, how, or on what grounds, it is, that we are said to be *now immortal*, even before death—nay, notwithstanding death? Can

* The other passage erroneously supposed to sanction the popular notion on this subject tells us, as we shall see below, that he *did* "desire to depart, and to be with Christ."

we be mortal, (as we confessedly are,) and immortal, at one and the same time? What is the meaning of an *immortal mortal*? i. e. a *never-dying, ever-dying* man? Scripture always represents man as being, in his present state, mortal, and as to be invested with immortality, at the Resurrection, and not before. While we are told that God “has brought life and immortality *to light*, through the Gospel,” and that the believer *shall* partake of them at the proper (because the appointed) time—we are assured, on the same authority, that Jehovah “only *hath* immortality.”* No mere man shares it with Him. To say that a creature that is, during every moment of its existence, exposed to death, and sure to meet with it, (except in the case of the generation of believers who shall be found alive, on the earth, at the time of the Lord’s coming, and shall be transformed, without tasting death,) is yet immortal, or never-dying, does indeed seem a plain contradiction of what is usually termed “common-sense.” The Word of God uniformly represents death and life as so opposed to each other, that they cannot possibly co-exist. A man cannot be dead and alive, at one and the same time. And yet, the commonly received opinion requires us to believe that he can. He cannot possibly be immortal, while he has death to meet with—or, in other words, enter upon immortality, till he shall have passed into the state in which there shall be “no more death.” *Life* is only associated with the *present* state, and the *Resurrection*, &c.—*death* with the *Intermediate* condition—and that

* 1 Tim. vi. 16.

throughout the whole Bible. To be sure, it is attempted to get rid of the difficulty, by asserting that while the man is, as to his *body*, dead—his *soul* lives. But assertion is not proof; and, till some better evidence than has ever yet been offered in confirmation of this position, be adduced, we must decline to accept it as proved. And, besides, there is an error in the distinction so commonly made between the body and soul, in this respect—in supposing that the *body* can die, but the *soul* cannot. It is incorrect to speak of the body, *per se*, dying, inasmuch as it never, *per se*, had life. The whole man, (“spirit, and soul, and body,”) has life, and the whole man dies—death being the dissolution of the connexion, which, in life, subsisted between those several parts of which his being was constituted. The body of the living man, were it not for its union with his “spirit, and soul,” is as much a mere corpse, (as the term for the dead man’s body is) as if he were dead.

To such as are acquainted with even the letter of Scripture, it is unnecessary to remark, that no such phrase as that which we hear so commonly used, “immortal soul,” or “immortality of the soul,” is to be found within the whole compass of the volume. And the reason of this is obvious—viz., that *the thing itself is not there*. Were the doctrine Scriptural, the phrase, or something equivalent to it, would be Scriptural too. As the phrase is of human origin, so is the doctrine; as we hope to shew from the plain and abundant teach-

ing of the Word of God; which every where inculcates a very different lesson.

But it may be asked—does not Paul say, in the conclusion of the very passage which we have just been considering—“absent from the body, and present with “the Lord?” Indeed he does; and in so saying does not, of course, in the least contradict his own other statement, that he did *not* desire the *unclothed*, *i.e.*, the Intermediate state. He could not, and did not, in any way, contradict himself, in thus speaking; for he is manifestly (indeed, avowedly, as has been already remarked) contrasting (not the sufferings of the present state with any supposed deliverance therefrom, and partial blessedness, in the Intermediate state, at all, but)—the two different states of *embodied* existence, *viz.*, the present body of flesh and blood, in which the believer “groans;” and the “spiritual body” of the Resurrection, which shall bring relief from all “the ills that flesh is heir to.” His avowed object is, to contrast, for the comfort of those whom he addressed, the two *bodies* in question, with neither of which, of course, the Intermediate condition, which is a *disembodied* state, can have any possible connexion. The interval, then, between death and resurrection is, of necessity, altogether excluded from the apostle’s consideration, in his argument here. When he says, then, that he is “willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be “present with the Lord,” his meaning is evidently to be seen in the argument he had just used. As, in his body of flesh and blood he was “absent from the Lord,”

(v. 6), so, in his "spiritual body" of the Resurrection, he shall be "present with the Lord," (v. 8). And to the believer's apprehensions the transition will be *immediate*. There will be no perceptible interval between the sufferings, in the body of flesh and blood, and the glory to be revealed, in the "spiritual body" of the Resurrection—the unconscious "sleep" of death alone intervening.*

Paul knew nothing, and the Bible knows nothing, of the comparatively modern figment of disembodied existence. Man, even in his glorified state, shall possess a *body*—different indeed from his present, but still an organized body—and Scripture invariably connects man's *body*, as one of his necessary constituent parts, with his conscious existence—no *body*, no *man*. As man is composed of the three parts, "spirit, and soul, and body," (1 Thes. v. 23) and those parts are separated from each other at death, the man then ceases to possess conscious existence;† and when those parts shall again

* "Sleep" is the constant figure used to denote the disembodied state throughout the Word of God at large, as shall be shewn below—and a more appropriate one could not, of course, have been chosen. A man in sound sleep is so utterly unconscious of what is passing around him, that were a man to put a pistol to his head, to shoot him, he could neither prevent him, or even ask him to spare his life. In such a case, the return to the business of life, on the following morning, *immediately* succeeds, in the individual's *apprehensions*, the relinquishment of it on the previous evening—there having been no consciousness of the interval which had elapsed. So will it be with the believer virtually—"absent from the body, present with the Lord." (See Appendix.)

† Which is virtually, so far as he is concerned, any existence.

be united to each other, at the Resurrection, man shall be re-constituted, and enter upon a state of immortal life; the "spiritual body" not acting (as that of flesh and blood did) as a drag on the wheels of his spirituality, but as the willing handmaid of the pure Spirit, in the blessed, and untiring service of Him who "redeemed" him "to God, by His blood." Nothing but the re-union of his several constituent parts can re-constitute man, as such, and restore him to conscious (*i.e.*, virtually to any) existence.

The Word of God always represents the Lord's Second Advent, as the period when His people shall, for the first time after death, *see* Him, face to face; whether the statements be His own, or those of His inspired servants. As an example of the former, take that very remarkable passage from His beautiful, affecting, and instructive valedictory address to His disciples, designed to comfort them under their sorrow, at the prospect of His leaving them. Considering the circumstances under which He thus addressed them, and His avowed object in doing so—*viz.*, that their hearts might not be overwhelmed with grief on the occasion of His departure; surely, were there any foundation for the now-common opinion, as to the Intermediate state, He could not, and would not, have pretermitted the opportunity thus offered, of directing their attention to the nearness of the relief presented by the supposed partial blessedness of that condition, to which death would so shortly introduce them; when they would in the spirit hold converse with Him, for a season, in a sort of

chrysalis-like preparation for the full fruition of the glory with which they should be invested, when they should put on the beautiful garments of the "spiritual body" of the Resurrection, at the period of His second coming.

But, does He thus console them, under their sorrows? No, indeed; very far from it. He adopts the same topic of consolation here, that He does on all other occasions recorded in the Word, by entirely overlooking (as Paul does, in the case we have just been considering, and every where else,) the supposed partial blessedness of the Intermediate state, (of which he gives not the least hint) and directing their attention immediately, and at once, to the subject of *His return*, as that, in the contemplation of which they should find the balm they sought for their wounded feelings—the true ground of comfort in their affliction. "Let not your heart be troubled," saith He, "ye believe in God, believe also in me. . . . I go, to prepare a place for you. And, if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*, and receive you unto myself; *that (i.e., in order that, by that process of my return), where I am, there ye may be also*"—not 'if I go to prepare a place for you, I will send my messenger, death, to bring you up to me to heaven'—which he assuredly would have said, were the notion of pre-resurrection union with Him, on the part of His believing people, correct. What say the advocates of the common opinion of disembodied blessedness, and conscious presence with Christ, in the interval between death and resurrection,

to this? Will they try to explain how our Lord *could* have said to those who (were their opinion correct) He knew must be present with Him immediately after death, that He would come again, and receive them unto Himself, in order that (*iva*) by that His coming, &c., they might be with Him? As if He had said, 'to be sure, I know that ye shall be *with me at death*, in conscious, partial enjoyment of my presence, but I will *come again*, in order that ye may be *with me*.' Surely, surely, it is worse than mere trifling with the Word of God, to take such liberties with it. How could He have more plainly said, that they shall not see Him, or enjoy His presence, till He shall "come again, and receive them to Himself, in order that," by that process, they may be "with" Him? If they were to be with Him *before* His coming, how could it be necessary that He should "*come again*" to "receive" them to Himself, that they might be "with" Him?

Another specimen of our Lord's teaching on the subject is taken from His confutation of the Sadducees, as to the Resurrection; which, on the principle of disembodied existence, would have been anything but a confutation, for, in that case they would have had the advantage of Him in the argument. Yet, so plainly did He refute their notions, that the Scribes who stood by said, "Master, thou hast well said. And after that "they (the Sadducees) durst not ask Him any questions "at all." And now, what was His argument, which was thus so unanswerably sufficient to prove resurrec-

tion? It was this—"Now, *that the dead are raised*, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the "Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and "the God of Jacob. *For* He is not a God of the *dead*, "but of the *living*, for all live to Him." (Luke xxii. 37, 38.) Is it not manifest here, that they must *rise* again, in order to have *life*? How, otherwise, could these words of Moses prove *resurrection*? They mention no such thing, and yet our Lord alleges them as proving it; and the Sadducees, by their silence, and the Scribes, by their confession, admit it as proved.—How is this? A paraphrase of His argument will shew. 'God is not the God of the *dead*, (which you yourselves acknowledge *they now are*;) but of the "*living*," which they *must become* before He can be their God—and as this is impossible, except by the process of Resurrection, we have *therefore*, in these words of Moses, an incontrovertible proof "that the dead are raised."' How, if they were, in any sense "*alive*," in the disembodied state, could it be necessary that they should *rise* from the dead, in order to *live*? and how could this place, in that case, prove resurrection? It is no wonder, that our Lord's argument in this place presents such difficulties as it does, to the believer in disembodied existence, as it is impossible to understand it consistently therewith. Yet there is not a plainer passage in the Bible.

The testimony of Scripture on this subject is uniform. Of course it cannot contradict itself. And it is as abundant, as it is uniform. Let us take a few instances

out of the many that present themselves in the Word. The Psalmist says, "I will *behold thy face* in righteousness : I shall be satisfied, *when I awake with thy likeness.*" Here is a plain corroboration of the places already adduced. The Psalmist evidently did not hold the now-common notion respecting the disembodied state, for his statement implies that he would not be "satisfied" with it. He would be, according to his own words, only "satisfied" with Resurrection. "I shall be *"SATISFIED, when I AWAKE with thy likeness."* The obvious allusion here to the "sleep" by which the disembodied state is every where described in Scripture, proves that the Resurrection is his object of desire in this passage. It is also plain that he did not expect to enjoy the beatific vision, nor to be "conformed in likeness to the Lord, till the same period. "I will behold thy face in righteousness . . . *when I awake,*" &c.—not sooner, and therefore not in the disembodied state. Were the common notion on the subject correct, he must have said, 'I shall be satisfied, *when I fall asleep,* with thy likeness'—for then, according to the popular tradition, he would at once, at death, have been consciously present with the Lord, with which he could not but have been "satisfied;" but he says just the contrary—"when *I awake,*" &c.—viz., from the sleep of the Intermediate State—in other words, at the Resurrection.

A parallel passage is to be found in 1 John iii. 2, where we thus read—"Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; "but we know that *when He shall appear,* we shall be

“like him, *for* we shall *see Him as He is.*” Here is another very plain confirmation of the same truth. The writer of these words evidently knew nothing of the pre-resurrection hope of the present day. He did not expect to be assimilated to the likeness of His Lord, (which must be the effect of personal converse with Him) or to “see Him as He is,” till the time “when He shall *appear.*” Then, of course, he knew that he should not, in any sense, “see Him” *before* that time. For it would be impossible for His people to “see Him” however imperfectly, and not be made “like Him.” And we may just remark, *en passant*, in reply to the imputation so freely, and frequently indulged in, in disparagement of our “blessed hope,” that it is, at best, a vain, and unprofitable speculation, uninfluential for good—that the Apostle’s estimate of it, as recorded in the verse immediately following that which we have been considering, is very different—“And every man “that hath *this* hope in him,” (viz., the hope of seeing Him as He is, when He shall appear—and not the false hope of *seeing* Him *before* He *appears*, which is impossible) “*purifieth* himself, even as He is pure.”

Another passage, peculiarly to our purpose, is 1 Thes. iv. 13–18, wherein the Apostle addresses himself to the very object which our Lord had in view in the place we have so lately had under consideration—viz., the consoling of those to whom he writes, under the trial of separation, by death, from those they loved. And we shall find him (as we must, of course, expect) adopting exactly the same topic of consolation, which our Lord

used on the occasion referred to, viz., the hope of relief at the period of the Redeemer's second Advent, and the total overlooking of the supposed conscious existence of the disembodied state, of which, or of anything connected with it, he says not one syllable. Long as the quotation will be, we cannot refrain from giving the whole passage—"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are *asleep*, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have *no hope*. For, if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God *bring with Him*. For this we say unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who are *asleep*. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump (or trumpet) of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive, and remain, shall be caught up, together with them, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever *with the Lord*. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Here is Paul's theme of consolation for the believer sorrowing under the painful bereavements to which he refers. And what is it, from beginning to end, but the same which our Lord held forth to His mourning disciples, to console them under their grief on account of His anticipated separation from them? He directs their minds at once to the *Lord's coming again*, as the period when they, and the departed objects of their affections,

should not only be restored to each other's embraces, but be permanently re-united, never again to feel the pangs of separation; while he utterly *ignores* the notion of intermediate consciousness, or partial bliss, in a state of disembodied existence. It is absolutely impossible to believe, that Paul could have omitted, on this occasion, all reference to the supposed conscious partial blessedness of the Intermediate State, as a topic of consolation, had he known of the existence of any such condition. He never, in such case, would have exclusively directed the attention of those whom he addressed, to a mere "*hope*" (as he here does) of the *future* happiness of their departed relatives, without any mention of their *then* partial blessedness, as a step to it, did such a state exist. The "*no hope*" of which he speaks, in v. 13, is evidently no hope of re-union with the departed, as otherwise it would be unmeaning. He then goes on to set before them the true hope of the believer, in connexion with the subject, by assuring them, that as Jesus "*rose again*" from the dead, so should the deceased members of His mystical body be raised, in like manner, from the "*sleep*" of death, at His coming, when all such "*will God bring with Him.*" He next proceeds to state the order of the occurrence of events, at that period of the realization of the Church's hopes; assigning "*the Word of the Lord,*" as his authority for the statements he was about to make.

He tells them that believers who should be "*alive,*" in the body of flesh and blood, on earth, in that day—as he and they to whom he wrote were, when he thus ad-

dressed them, (for that is all he means, when he says, "we who are alive, and remain, &c.)—should not take precedence of the till then "sleeping," or deceased, members of the Lord's mystical body, by being sooner presented to Him; for, that the very first act, so to speak, in that glorious drama, should be the raising of the bodies of the departed saints—"the *dead* in Christ shall rise first"*—*i. e.*, before the then *living* in Christ shall be "changed"—"then," next in order, after the transformation of the latter, (which will assimilate their bodies to those of the raised and glorified saints), they "shall be caught up *together with them* in the clouds, to *meet* the Lord in the air," the result of which rapture of both classes shall be, that thenceforward they shall be re-united to each other in indissoluble union, in the presence of the Lord. "And *so* shall we ever be with the Lord"—*i. e.*, by this process they shall be for ever with Him, and therefore they could not have been with Him in the disembodied state—for, had they been so, they could not have left him, but must have re-

* This statement, that "the dead in Christ shall rise first," is sometimes adduced by the advocates of but one indiscriminate resurrection of believers and unbelievers, as if it taught that the believers rise *immediately* before the wicked, each in their own rank, or band—but the order here remarked is, between the *rising* of the *dead* saints and the *transformation* of the *living* ones. The dead, who had been unbelievers, are not spoken of in the passage at all—and this agrees with all other Scripture, which places the resurrection of the wicked always at a period of time *much* later than that of the saints, as shall be shewn in the Treatise on "The First Resurrection."

maintained with Him for ever, from the time of their union with Him at death (according to the common opinion).

It is plain, from this statement, that Paul knew as little, as we have seen our Lord and John did, of the topic of consolation now so commonly dwelt on, in addressing the bereaved mourner, in such language as the following—‘be patient—wait your Heavenly Father’s leisure, and soon shall you yourself be also delivered from the burden of the flesh, and the trials necessarily incidental to it, and transferred to the presence of the Lord, where the dear departed object of your affections is now engaged in singing the praises of the Lamb, and looking forward to being joined by you, at the period of your departure hence.’ This, and such as this, is what *man* has substituted for the plainly and repeatedly declared truth of the Word of God, on this most important and interesting subject—viz., that at the period of the Lord’s coming, and not before, shall His people either behold his face, or meet each other in His Kingdom. The Apostle concludes his exhortation, as well he may, by saying—“Wherefore, comfort one another with *these* words.” And full of comfort, indeed, they are to the believer suffering under such bereavement. No consolation of man’s devising to be compared with it for a moment!

We now turn to another portion of Scripture, which bears most explicitly, and abundantly, on the subject before us, viz., 1 Cor. xv., *passim*—a portion of the Word of God, which, were it uncorroborated by any other statement of Scripture, would be found too

strongly confirmatory of the views here maintained, to be successfully impugned; the peculiar value of its testimony lying in the fact, that the error which the Apostle here sets himself to reprove, and confute, is the very same which it is the object of these pages to combat — viz., the notion of disembodied, conscious existence; which is manifest from the argument he employs in vv. 16–18—“*If the dead rise not, . . .*” “then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are *perished*”—a conclusion which he knew they would not, as professors of Christianity, admit the possibility of; as a future state of existence is one of the chief articles of the Christian faith, which they, of course, held. His knowledge of their admission of the doctrine of a future state, thus necessarily ties down his argument to the subject of the error respecting the Intermediate condition. As if he had said, ‘I know that you admit the doctrine of a future state, but I tell you that you err, in looking for that state before the Resurrection—for, “*if the dead rise not, . . .*” “*. . . then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are “perished,”*’* which would, of course, be inconsistent with what you know to be the plainly-revealed truth, as to a future state of existence. To the Resurrection, then, must you look, as the period of their entering

* And, if the dead Saints be in conscious bliss, in any degree, or sense, in the presence of the Lord, in the Intermediate state, how could Paul say, as he here does, that unless there be a resurrection, they have “perished”? How “perished,” if in *any* way present with the Lord?

upon that union with their Lord, and with each other, which you erroneously conceive them to have been introduced into at death.' This is plainly his argument in this place.

In v. 32, again, he speaks in the same strain—"If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, *if the dead rise not ?* let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Here, again, as in the previous case, the hope of resurrection is the *only* counterpoise, in the Apostle's estimate, to the trials and sufferings of the present state. It would have benefitted him very materially, to have entered into the supposed state of blessedness at death, though the body had never been raised. How comes he, then, to overlook altogether the supposed nearer relief of the pre-resurrection state? The answer is easily given—he not only knew nothing of any such state, but had just been, in the place previously considered, cautioning them against the error of supposing that there exists any such. Why does he not say, 'if there be *no Intermediate State of conscious blessedness*, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?' Because he could not use such language, consistently with truth. Were such a notion well-founded, he would naturally, and necessarily, have referred to the hope of deliverance at that supposed period of union with the Lord. So conscious was he, however, that no such state existed, that he had no hesitation in preferring the temporal enjoyments of the present life, to the vain hope of *any* supposed relief short of that furnished by the Resur-

rection-hope. As much as to say—‘so persuaded am I of the non-existence of any such state as you look for between death and resurrection—and that, in that case, if there be no resurrection, man must *perish*,—that I hesitate not to say, I should in such a case prefer the enjoyments of this life, while they last, before I am for ever cut off from *any* hope of future existence. “Let us eat, and drink, for to-morrow we “die.” In vv. 53–54, the putting-on of immortality, and the resurrection of the body from the grave, are most distinctly connected, as contemporaneous events—“This *corruptible* must put on *incorruption*, and this “mortal must put on *immortality*. So, *when* this “corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this “mortal shall have put on immortality *then* shall be “brought to pass the saying that is written,” &c.

Again, the same Apostle in Chapter viii. of his Epistle to the Romans, sets forth the Resurrection, and its accompaniments, as the *only* hope of deliverance to man, as well as all sublunary creation, from their present bondage to trial and suffering, because of sin. And here, as in the places already passed under review, he totally ignores any such state, as one of imperfect happiness, to be entered on at death. There is not, in the whole compass of Scripture, a more beautiful, or significant passage, than that commencing with v. 17, and ending with v. 23, of this magnificent chapter—“And “if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs “with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that “we may be also glorified together.” Now, the Lord’s

own glory is not to be entered upon, as all Scripture assures us, till His coming. He is now, as He Himself tells us, sitting on His Father's throne, and has yet to take His own. If, then, according to this place, we are to be "*glorified together*" with Him, we must await the period of His glorification, for that purpose.

But we are not left to inferential proofs in this case, for the Apostle goes on to shew that to the Resurrection alone must we look for the attainment of the church's hopes for futurity. "For I reckon," he adds, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the *manifestation of the sons of God*. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same; in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the *redemption of our body*." Here we have the only hope of man's deliverance connected expressly with the Resurrection, which is necessarily what is meant by the "*redemption of the body*." And we have further the hope of all sublunary creation (*πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις*—every creature) declared to be hanging upon that period of "redemption" of man's

"body" from the grave, as the predicted time of its deliverance from the bondage to vanity, (decay, pain, death, &c.) to which it was subjected by man's sin—for, as it suffered through his transgression—never having itself broken the law of God—it is but just that it should participate in His "redemption,"* and therefore be, as here, in a figure, represented as looking with "earnest expectation," (*ἀποκαρδοκία*—a stretching out of the neck, to look for a much-desired object) for "the manifestation of the sons of God"—which shall be the period of its deliverance, as well as theirs. Paul never could in such a passage as this have overlooked, as he does, such a happy, though imperfect, condition as the common opinion represents the alleged disembodied state of consciousness to be, had he known of any such. He must, in that case, necessarily have referred to it, as a step to the glory to be revealed at the Lord's coming, according to the prevalent notion.

We may also instance the same Apostle's language, in 2 Tim. iv. 6–8, where he speaks of his "departure" hence, by death, and yet connects *all* his hope (not with the time of that departure, but) with the day of the

* And, besides, the *redemption* effected by the Saviour must be *co-extensive with the curse*—otherwise He could not see the full fruits of "the travail of His soul." Man having brought the inferior sublunary creation, animate and inanimate, under the curse by his sin, would selfishly *monopolize the Redemption* to himself, and leave them, (the innocent sufferers on his account) to get out of the predicament into which he had brought them, the best way they could—but such are not God's purposes towards them, as this magnificent chapter proves throughout.

Lord's coming—"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day*; and not to me only, but to all them also that love *His appearing*." Why is all mention of the supposed disembodied state of partial bliss omitted here, when his very subject is his approaching "departure?"—and there are many similar passages in his Epistles, and those of the other Apostles.

The expectation of Job must not be omitted here, (though out of its proper place,) as an example, among others which might be adduced, of the views entertained by the Old Testament saints on the subject before us. And the great antiquity of the Book of Job renders his testimony peculiarly valuable in this respect—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day *upon the earth*: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see *for myself*, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." The writer is aware that there have been proposed various renderings of the Hebrew in this case, but the great truth remains unaffected by any of them, that Job has here expressed himself as having no hope of "*seeing*" the Redeemer, till that day when He shall *return to earth* in glorified humanity; when he (Job) shall also be in the body, i. e. in the body of the Resurrection, which he contrasts with what he calls "*this body*," which was, he knew,

to see corruption. As much as to say, though this present "body" shall soon go the way of all flesh, yet there is in prospect for me another body, incorruptible and glorious, in which I shall "*see*" my Redeemer, when He comes to "stand upon the earth." Job evidently knew no more than did, as we have seen, Paul, or John, or our Lord himself, of any such doctrine as that of supposed intermediate conscious presence, in any sense, or in any place, with the Lord.

It is also to be observed, that the promises of God to His people are always connected, in Scripture, as to their fulfilment, with the period of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, at His coming, and their Resurrection; and never, even in one single case, with the time of their death. Take, for instance, the case of the eminent believers, who are held forth in Heb. xi., as examples of faith proved to be genuine by its effects. Surely, if *any* of the children of God were to enter into even comparative bliss at death, those here enumerated must have been included in the number—and yet what do we read?—"These all died in faith, *not* having received the promises, but having seen them *afar off*," &c. Now, were the inheritance of the promises entered upon at death, as the common tradition has it—then, the nearer they were to their departure hence, the nearer also, of course, to the possession of the inheritance; but here we are told that, at the time of their death, they "*saw* them *afar off*." (v. 13.) But we have yet further information on the subject, lower down in the chapter, where it is not only repeated, that they died without

having obtained the promises, but the *reason* of this is distinctly assigned—"And these all, having obtained "a good report through faith, received *not* the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, "that they, *without us*, should not be made perfect." Exactly—that till the accomplishment of the everlasting purpose of Jehovah, in the gathering-in of the last of His elect, *none* should be glorified.*

Indeed, it may well be asked, what would be the meaning of a day of Resurrection for those who were already in bliss, with Christ? or, a day of Judgment to those whose eternal destiny had been already settled? Or, what would a "day of Judgment" be for at all, (sofar, at least, as believers are concerned) if each be judged, individually, at the time of death? Does not all Scripture represent the "day of Judgment" as the period when *the dead*, as well as the living, shall be judged? See, for instance, the following passage—"I charge thee, "therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, "who shall judge the quick, *and the dead*, at His "appearing, and His kingdom," &c. (2 Tim. iv. 5). What could be plainer than this is, both as to the fact

* This chapter furnishes still further evidence, that the primitive Christians looked to resurrection, and not to any supposed disembodied bliss, where we are told, in v. 35, that "others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a *better resurrection*—their object having been, (as we know from Ecclesiastical history to have been the case of many in those times) to obtain the martyr's share in "the First Resurrection," here called a "better resurrection." They plainly had no *pre-resurrection* hope.

of the futurity of the judgment of the dead, and the relative period of its occurrence? And how is *such* a judgment to be reconciled with this idea of intermediate consciousness?

But, there is yet more evidence in this chapter, on the point under review, when taken in connexion with another place which shall be presently brought forward. "By faith he sojourned in *the* land of promise, as in a "strange country, dwelling in tabernacles, with Isaac, "and Jacob, the heirs, with him, of the same promise. "For he looked for the city which hath *the* foundations," (τὴν τοῦ θεμελίου ἔχουσαν πόλιν—viz., those enumerated, and described in Rev. xxi. 19, 20,) "whose "builder and maker is God." Heaven, then, was not "the land of promise," as is so commonly supposed;* but the very land so specially pointed out, in the covenant with Abraham, by its well-known boundaries, and bearings. Nothing else than the everlasting possession, then, of *that* land, thus made over in the Divine covenant to Abraham, and renewed to Isaac, and Jacob, can be a fulfilment of the promise. It should, therefore, be at once admitted, that they must attain to the enjoyment of it, by *resurrection* from the state of death; and so we find it distinctly declared that it shall be—of which we shall give one example from the Old Testament, and one from the New.

* The "heavenly" country spoken of, in v. 16, is their own land, in its renewed and restored state. "Heavenly" does not signify *in* Heaven, but *of* it.

Israel are represented, in Ezek. xxxvii. 11, as saying, with reference to the non-enjoyment of the promise made to their fathers—"our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts"—i. e., our hope of inheriting the land is lost—the "parts" assigned to our respective tribes are not possessed by them. Now, mark the answer of God, by the prophet, to this their complaint—"Therefore, prophesy, and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up *out of your graves*, and bring you *into the land of Israel*. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit (i. e., breath) in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in *your own land*: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Then follows, in express teaching, as well as by the visible instruction of a most significant symbol, the prediction of the then re-union of the two great sections of the family of Abraham—their possession of their own land for ever, under "the beloved" their King—having been gathered from among the heathen" for this purpose. And then, in conclusion, it is said, "they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in *the land*, that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and my servant David (i. e. "the beloved," as the name

"signifies) shall be their Prince for ever." From this passage it is evident, that it is by Resurrection they are to be put into possession of the promises; and equally plain, that earth is to be the scene of their enjoyment of them, and not the supreme heavens, with which man never has had, and never shall have, even in his most perfect state, any connexion.

We now turn to the New Testament, for an example of the same kind; and shall find it just as explicit as that from the Old—"And now I stand and am judged "for the hope of *the* promise made of God unto our "fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, incessantly serving God, day and night, hope to come. "For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused "of the Jews. Why *should* it be thought a thing "*incredible* with you, that God should *raise the dead*?" (Acts xxvi. 6-8). Does this require comment? Any attempt to make plainer an argument so exceedingly simple, and intelligible, could only have the effect, which too many (so-called) expositions of the Word have, of "darkening counsel by words without knowledge." It is plainly implied here, that they shall rise from the dead, to inherit the promised land. Intermediate hope, of any kind, is studiously excluded. The *only* hope of obtaining the promise is through *Resurrection*, according to the Apostle, in this place, as elsewhere. The constant subject of accusation against Paul was, that he taught the Resurrection, as we find all through the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Had he taught the *immortality of the soul*, they would not have interfered with

him, for the heathen philosophers taught *that* in their schools—the truth being, that it is a *heathen*, and not a Christian, doctrine. Plato, and many other philosophers, held, and taught, the separate, conscious existence of the soul, after death; just as so many professing Christians do now; but did not hold the Resurrection of the body—and most assuredly they manifested less inconsistency, in thus believing, than do the Christian advocates of the soul's separate immortality, considering the superior advantages, and opportunities of information, enjoyed by the latter.

Having stated that there are but two texts of Scripture which are generally (indeed, so far as the writer is aware, always) relied on by the assertors of conscious, disembodied existence, as supporting their opinion on that subject—and having considered one of them, viz., 2 Cor. v. 8—(“absent from the body, present with the Lord”)—which we trust has been proved to have no connexion whatever with the subject—we now proceed to the consideration of the other, which is found in Phil. i. 23, and is as follows—“For I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.” The first remark we offer on this passage, is the obvious one, that it is *exactly parallel* to the former—inasmuch as “to depart” is equivalent to being “*absent from the body*,” and “to be with Christ” to being “*present with the Lord*”—so that the reasoning by which it has been shewn, that the former has no connexion whatever with the Intermediate State, will equally apply to the place now before us.

If, in the former case, the being "absent from the body," and "present with the Lord," did not mean (as we have seen it certainly did not, and could not) that the believer's intermediate condition is one of conscious blessedness, in the presence of the Lord, (for the Apostle specially disavows that subject); then neither does, or can, the exactly parallel language of the place now before us mean so. "To depart, and be with Christ," is certainly not stronger language than to be "absent from the body," and "present with the Lord." If the being "present with the Lord," of the latter passage, necessarily signifies (as we have seen) that union of the believer with the Lord, which is to be commenced, according to all Scripture, at His coming in His glory, and the resurrection of the then dead saints, and transformation and rapture of the then living ones—then such must also be the signification of the former. If, when the Apostle speaks of being "absent from the body," and "present with the Lord," he, in the same argument, cautions us against applying this to the Intermediate State (as we have seen that he does), then may we be very sure, that the same caution is implied in the exactly similar and parallel language of the place before us—"to depart, and to be with Christ." Applying, then, to this passage the principle which is necessarily involved in the other, there is no difficulty in the case. The unconsciousness of the disembodied state is the key to its elucidation. On that principle, his admission into the Kingdom of Christ would be to him, virtually, an *immediate* passing out of the trials of this

life, and the sufferings incidental to the body of flesh and blood, into the glories of that kingdom, and the bliss inseparable from the "spiritual body" of the resurrection—*no conscious interval having intervened*—and thus a literal fulfilment of his desire "to depart, and to be with Christ." (See Appendix.)

Thus much is, in any case, certain—that Paul here cannot, and therefore does not, contradict the teaching of all other Scripture on the point; including his own uniform agreement therewith elsewhere, as well as his express denial of the existence of a state of disembodied consciousness, in the place we have been so lately considering. Therefore, look where we may for an explanation of this place, it is evident that none can possibly be admitted, which would involve any such contradiction.

Much unnecessary difficulty has been thrown around this subject, by the very general confounding of the terms *ψυχή* and *πνεῦμα*, as if they had the same signification, which is not the case. The same confusion has extended to their English equivalents, as though they were synonymous terms, which they are not. Were they so in the original, Paul never would have said "*το πνεῦμα, καὶ ἡ ψυχή*," nor the translators have rendered these words (as they have properly done), by "spirit, *and* soul." It is too often forgotten, that *ψυχή* signifies merely "*life*,"* as well as "*soul*"—and that

* It is used of *Fish* in Rev. xvi. 3, and frequently elsewhere applied to the inferior animal creation—and is of very common occurrence in the Book of Psalms, as well as elsewhere, in the sense

πνεῦμα signifies the *breath* that we breathe, in common with the inferior animals, as well as "spirit," in the higher sense in which it is sometimes used. The meaning, then, of each term must be ascertained, in each particular instance of its use, by what may be called the contextual evidence. It entirely depends on what may be the subject, in any particular case, whether the terms in question are to be taken in the one, or the other, of the above significations, respectively. And it is to the general neglect of this rule, that all misapprehensions as to the meaning of them in particular cases are to be ascribed. Let us examine a few passages of the Word, in which they are used indiscriminately for "soul" and "life," in the one case—and "spirit" and "breath," in the other.

Perhaps the most apposite instance of the former which can be adduced is found in Matt. xvi. 25, 26,—
 "For whosoever will save his *life*, (*ψυχὴν*) shall lose it;
 "and whosoever will lose his *life*, (*ψυχὴν*) for my sake,
 "shall find it. For, what is a man profited, if he shall
 "gain the whole world, and lose his own *soul*? (*ψυχὴν*)
 "or what shall a man give in exchange for his *soul*?
 "(*ψυχῆς*)." Here, in the same sentence, we have the word *ψυχὴ* twice rendered "life"—and twice "soul"—and the argument of our Lord, throughout the passage, and its context, makes it plain, that it is of temporal life He is speaking, and not of the soul in the higher

of mere animal life; and in some of these latter cases is erroneously rendered in English by the term "soul," when *life* is obviously what is meant. In Greek, and Latin, the *same* word stands for *both*.

sense commonly attached to the term. His argument may be thus paraphrased—‘He that for sake of saving his (temporal) life, shall be unwilling to part with it for my sake, if called on to do so, shall miss that better life in my coming kingdom, which shall be the portion of those who shall have either laid down, or been willing to lay down, their lives for my sake.’ That the life of *His* kingdom is that which He here holds forth as the reward of such as will have suffered for His sake, is evident from His immediately subsequent reference to that kingdom; the prefiguration of which, by miniature representation, He prefaces with the word “for”—thus shewing the connexion. Luke’s version of the language of our Lord, on this occasion, differs from that of Matthew only in the substitution of the word “himself” (ix. 25) for “his life,” thus confirming the view here taken.

When Matthew represents our Lord as saying “Fear “not them which kill the body, and are not able to kill “the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to kill both “soul and body in hell,” (x. 28).—And when Luke, in recording our Lord’s language, on the same occasion, represents Him as saying, “Be not afraid of them that “kill the body, and after that, have *no more* that they “can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, “fear Him who, after He hath killed, hath power to “cast into hell,” (xii. 4, 5), it is plain that they both, though in different ways, ascribe to Him the same statement—viz., that though men may take away the *temporal* life (which is so necessarily connected with the

body, that depriving a man of it may, in one sense, be called "killing the body,"—as such it is to human apprehension) they cannot take away the *eternal* life which is given in the kingdom of God, and is always, in Scripture, connected, in point of time, with the Resurrection of the body from the grave. To these two passages must, of course, be applied, as to others similarly circumstanced, the rule of analogy, which will not admit of their application in a sense inconsistent with what we have already seen to be the uniform teaching of the Word, on the subject of the disembodied state; which is not even alluded to in either of these places—the use of the term *Γέννα*, for hell, in *both*, proving that the *pre-resurrection* state cannot be taken into the account at all—*Γέννα* being the constant scriptural term for the hell of the wicked, into which they shall be cast at the period of their *judgment*—a totally different term (*Αδης*) being always employed in the Word of God, to denote the Intermediate State.

Having thus considered (and, it is trusted, satisfactorily replied to) the arguments founded on the two principal passages of Scripture relied on on the other side, as well as one or two other points of less moment; we now propose to adduce some plain texts of the Word of God, which teach, as expressly as it is possible to do, the utter and absolute unconsciousness of the disembodied state. And first we refer to Psalm vi. 3–5—"My soul is also sore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; O save me for thy mercies' sake. For in death there is *no* remembrance

“of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?” This is surely plain enough. The Psalmist contemplating the troubles of the present life, and knowing that there should be no conscious exemption from them till the Lord’s coming, calls on Him to “return” and “deliver” his “soul” from Hades,* that he might enjoy the privilege and blessedness of uninterrupted communion with Him in His Kingdom, as it would not be possible in the pre-resurrection state, because that (“for”) “in death there is,” saith he, “no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thanks?” Here it is very evident, that the *sole* hopes of the speaker are bound up with the coming of the Lord, and the then deliverance of His people’s “souls” from Hades, and their bodies from the grave—events which the Scriptures everywhere represent as synchronous. That “death,” and the “grave,” here signify merely the *state* of death, when the body lies in the grave, is plain; for there would otherwise be no meaning at all in the place. The writer has more than once heard it gravely said, in conversation with himself, that it was ‘plain’ that it meant nothing more than that the “body,” when “in the grave,” could not remember God, or render thanks to Him!! but, unfortunately for the credit of such a notion as this, the body of the *living* man does not remember God, or give Him praise. The *body* is not the sentient part of man, and is, therefore, in the case of the living man, as little capable of those exercises, as in that of the dead man. All that is ‘plain,’ then, in

* Where it would be at that period.

this proposed interpretation of the place, is its obvious erroneousness.

In Psalm xxx. 9, we have another statement, very much to the same effect—"What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?" The remarks made on the previous passage may be here repeated—viz., that the *state* of death is here meant by "going down to the pit; and, as the body even of the living man cannot praise God, so neither can the "blood" and "dust" in the present case—it is therefore the *person* that is here spoken of, as being incapable, in the intermediate condition, of "praising" God, and "declaring" His "truth." Here, again, the supposed state of disembodied consciousness is ignored.

We next turn to Psalm lxxxviii. 10–12, which is peculiarly to our purpose—"Wilt thou shew wonders to the *dead*? shall the *dead* arise and *praise* thee? "Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in *destruction*? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of *forgetfulness*?" or, as it is in the Prayer-Book version, "in the land where *all* things are forgotten?" This is a plain confirmation of the passages already considered. Surely "the dead," were they consciously with Christ, in the disembodied state, could not but see "wonders," and "praise" God, in consequence. "The grave," and "destruction," the "dark," and "the land where all things are forgotten," are here put for the Intermediate State, as being descriptive of it. How can

this language be applied to a state of consciousness? It is sometimes said, that all that is meant here, by "the land where all things are forgotten" is, that the affairs of *this* life are forgotten in the presence of the Lord, between death and the resurrection. But this is gratuitously supplementing the Word of God; and, besides, is totally at variance with the internal evidence of the whole passage, as well as its express language, which limits the forgetfulness in question to the "loving-kindness," "faithfulness," "righteousness," and "wonders" of *God*, as its objects.

In Psalm civ. 33, it is written, "I will sing unto the Lord, *as long as I live*; I will sing praise to my God, *while I have my being*." It is plainly implied here, that when the speaker would cease to live, he would cease to sing unto the Lord; and when his present state of "*being*" would come to an end, he could no longer "praise God," while under the power of Hades. His reference immediately afterwards to the period when "the sinners shall be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked be no more," as that when his "soul" shall "bless" and "praise the Lord," shews that his hopes were not connected with the disembodied state, but with the coming of the Lord, with which the Word of God always associates that consumption of the wicked out of the earth, to which the speaker here refers; and which shall be also the period when the people of God shall be put into everlasting possession of it—when he should both "sing unto the Lord," and "praise Him" for ever.

Psalm cxv. 16-18 comes next under review, and is very much to the point—"The *heavens*, even the "heavens, are the *Lord's*; but the *earth* hath He "given to the children of *men*. The dead praise *not* "the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. "But we will bless the Lord from *this* time forth, and "for ever more." Here it is distinctly stated, that "the dead praise not the Lord;" which could not be the case, were they in a state of consciousness. It is also stated, that "the heavens," which the popular tradition assumes to be the abode of the souls of the righteous in the intermediate condition, do not belong to man, under any circumstances. They are "the Lord's"—"the *earth* hath He given to the children of *men*." And when the promised day arrives, of man's being put into possession of that his covenanted inheritance, (viz., the Resurrection-day,) then "from *this* time forth, and for evermore," shall they "bless the Lord." It will be remembered that Paul, in quoting one of the predictions of man's future dominion of the earth, as given in the 8th Psalm, observes that man had not, in his time, entered upon the sovereignty in question—"but now we see *not yet* all things put under him," (Heb. ii. 8) and there has been no change in this respect, since the Apostle's day. The supposed state of disembodied bliss, then, not only has no countenance from this place, more than from those which preceded it; but is, as in them, necessarily excluded from consideration altogether.

We now come to Psalm cxlvi. 2-4, which furnishes

quite as important evidence as any of the preceding passages—" *While I live* I will praise the Lord : I will " sing praises to my God, *while I have any being*. Put " not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in " whom there is no help. His *breath* goeth forth, he " returneth to his earth : in that very day *his thoughts* " *perish*." Surely, if these words are to be supposed to have any meaning, they must be understood as saying, that after death there is no conscious existence. The speaker clearly considers having the present "life," and having "*any being*," as one and the same thing. And if "on that very day" in which "his breath goeth forth," and "he returneth to his earth," "*his thoughts perish*," then what comes of the dogma of disembodied consciousness? It is sometimes said, that the thoughts which perish are merely worldly thoughts; but the internal evidence of the whole passage forbids such a mis-application of the language used; inasmuch as the "praising of the Lord" is that which the speaker says he could not do, except while he was alive, and had thus "*any being*." Worldly thoughts are therefore excluded from the argument.

In Ecclesiastes iii. 19-21, it is thus written—"That " which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; " even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so " dieth the other; yea, they have all *one breath*: so " that a man hath *no* pre-eminence above a beast: for " all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the " dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the " spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of

"the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Now, how is this statement reconcilable with the common opinion on the subject of death, and its accompaniments? The truth here so plainly taught is, that in the matter of *death* man has no pre-eminence over the beasts, which are said to *perish*. Whatever death be to the one, it is to the other; otherwise the one would have very considerable pre-eminence over the other, which is here declared to not be the case. "They have all *one breath*." It is evidently from a desire to avoid the conclusion plainly deducible from the argument of Scripture in this place, (because it does not comport with the current tradition on the subject) that the translators have rendered the same Hebrew word "*breath*" in v. 19, and "*spirit*" in v. 21. To have said "*spirit*," in the *former* case, would have apparently placed man and beast too much on a level, in assigning to the beast a "*spirit*"—and to have said, in the *latter*, that the "*breath*" of man goeth upward, would not have tallied with the notion of disembodied consciousness; with which the use of the term "*spirit*," (as implying the higher sense of the word) would, they conceived, better agree. Much difficulty has been thrown round an otherwise plain, intelligible portion of Scripture, by this unwarrantable changing of the rendering of the term in question, for the purpose of giving the apparent sanction of the Word of God to a notion plainly opposed to the uniform tenor of its teaching. The object, then, of this place is to teach us, that in the matter of *death*, man has no pre-eminence

over the beast—but, were the doctrine of the alleged immortality of the soul true, he would have *every* pre-eminence over the beast. Besides, soul and spirit are, in this case confounded with each other; for, the “*spirit's*” going up (were it even known that it did) would be no authority for saying that the “*soul*” is immortal. The “spirit” is not the “soul;” nor, of course, in that case, the “soul” the “spirit”—as has been shewn above.

In Chapter ix. 4, 5 we have further evidence to the same effect—“To him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but *the dead know not any thing*; neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.” If, according to this place, “the dead know not *any thing*,” how, then, can they be in conscious existence, in the presence of the Lord? That they have “no more a reward,” and that “the memory of them is forgotten” refers, of course, to their being after a short time not only without “reward,” or praise from, but even “forgotten” by, their fellow-men—for *God* cannot forget His people, neither shall they go unrewarded by *Him*. In v. 10 of the same chapter, we find the following statement on the subject—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor *knowledge*, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Here it is plainly declared, that in the state between death and resurrection, there is neither “*knowledge*,” nor that “*wisdom*” which is

its practical application. How, then, is man conscious in that state?

In xii. 7, it is thus written—"Then shall the dust "return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall "*return* unto God who gave it." It is curious that this place should ever have been misunderstood; nor could it have been, had it not been for the dogma of the soul's immortality, which it was desired to find scriptural sanction for—though here, as in the preceding case, soul is confounded with spirit, for the purpose of pressing the passage into the service of the tradition on that subject. The "spirit" here is just the "breath;" and when that "*returns* to God who gave it," (by "breathing into man's nostrils the breath of life,") how can a man exist, till it is restored to him, as it shall be at the Resurrection;* according to that beautiful passage, "Thou takest away their *breath*, "they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest "forth thy *Spirit*, they are *created*; and thou *renewest* "the face of the earth." "Spirit" here just means breath, as in the case of their original creation—God again "breathing into their nostrils the breath of life," which is here, as elsewhere, connected, in point of time, with the "renewal of the face of the earth," and removal of the curse, at the period of "the Regeneration" of all sublunary creation, and "the times of restitution of all things" here below. Had the original

* If man did not exist *before* God gave him breath, how can he exist, when that breath *returns* to God who gave it, till He *restores* it?

been here rendered, as in iii. 19, "*breath*," the meaning of the place would have been manifest, but then the object the translators had in view would not have been attained. Nor is it intended at all to impute to them intentional perversion of the truth, but merely to suggest that they, having assumed as true the dogma of the immortality of the soul, may have deemed it their duty to interpret such passages as this in accordance with their view of that subject.

Our next proof-text is Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19—"The grave cannot praise thee ; death cannot celebrate thee ; *they* that go down into the pit, *cannot* hope for thy truth ;—the *living*, the *living*, he shall praise thee, as *I do this day* ; the father to the children shall make known the truth." Comment could not make this plainer, and might possibly (like a great many professed expositions of Scripture) have the contrary effect, of "darkening counsel," which is already intelligible ; and shall, therefore, be very sparingly employed. The "grave," and "death," and "the pit" in this passage, as in some of the others already quoted, signify, (as in them shewn,) the interval between death and resurrection—the Intermediate state—and the testimony it offers on the subject agrees, as we see, with that which they supplied, as to the utter unconsciousness of that condition.

Having now considered such passages as expressly teach, as well as some which inferentially inculcate, the doctrine in question,—we proceed to examine some of the popular objections to it, which we trust to be able

to shew are untenable,—being founded, generally, on misapprehension of the meaning of the Scriptures adduced. Not that we suppose that any number, or supposed weight, of arguments on the other side of the question could possibly establish as a truth an opinion, the very opposite to which is (as has just been shewn), most expressly taught in the Word of God, as well as to be inferred from its uniform statements on kindred subjects. But, it is well to shew, as can be done, that the very arguments thus relied on are destructive of the cause they are brought to support, being plainly corroborative, in most cases, of the views maintained in these pages, instead of being opposed to them, as is imagined.

It is objected, for example, that the circumstances attending the *Transfiguration*, are inconsistent with the doctrine of unconsciousness in the interval between death and resurrection—inasmuch as the *dramatis personæ*, on that occasion, appeared (it is alleged,) in their normal, intermediate condition—viz., in the form supposed to belong to *that* state. Let us now examine this case, and see whether it supports the dogma of disembodied consciousness. Our Lord, having just said, that “whosoever should be ashamed of Him, and of His words, . . . of Him also should the Son of Man be ashamed, when He should *come* in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels”—proceeds to confirm this prediction in *words* of His coming kingdom, by a prophecy by *fact* of the same event, in the form of a miniature representation of the glories of that kingdom—prefacing the prefiguration in question by

saying, "Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom"—(Matt. xvi. 28,)—or, as it is elsewhere, "till they see the kingdom of God come with power"—(Mark, ix. 1,)—or, as in another place, "till they see the kingdom of God"—(Luke, ix. 27). From these several statements of the three Evangelists who relate the account of the Transfiguration, it is plain that it was designed by our Lord, as such a visible prefiguration of the glories of His kingdom, as would be calculated to awaken those whom He addressed, to a sense of the loss they should sustain by being "ashamed of" Him; and so exalt their ideas of the blessedness of that kingdom, as to put them upon more ardent desires, and endeavours, to seek it for themselves. Knowing how much less forcible is, generally speaking, the impression made on the mind by things merely *heard*, than by such as have been submitted to the sense of *sight*,* He here, as in other cases which might be enumerated, confirms, by the visible representation in question, the testimony of His immediately preceding *vivâ voce* prediction on the subject. In each of the three Evangelists, the account of the Transfiguration immediately follows the words of our Lord, as above, announcing the representation He was about to give.

Now, on the face of this statement of our Lord it is

* "*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.*"

evident, that, (as we have just seen) *His coming kingdom* (and not the Intermediate state) is the subject on which He addresses them—but the establishment of His kingdom shall be, according to all Scripture, co-incident with the *close* of the disembodied state, so far as His people are concerned, and their *deliverance from Hades*—so that there is no room for mistake on the point. But, besides, we have the most irrefragable internal evidence in the narrative of the Transfiguration itself, that it is *not* in their disembodied state the departed saints were seen on the occasion at all, but in the bodies they *shall* possess in the kingdom; (as, indeed, is indispensable to its being a representation of the kingdom)—for, we are expressly told that our Lord was *transfigured* (μετεμορφώθη—was metamorphosed) or manifested in a form *different* from His then natural one, otherwise it would not have been a metamorphose at all. Had He been seen in His then natural form, it could not be said that He was *metamorphosed*, but merely that He was seen in His then normal condition. But, further, *He* is the key to the comprehension of the whole matter. *He* had not even *died* at the time, and therefore *could not possibly* have appeared in His intermediate condition, which did not, of course, commence till after His death. In *His* case it was literally, *ex necessitate rei*, a metamorphose—and so was it also in the cases of Elias, and Moses, “who appeared *in glory*,”—(and therefore *not* in their disembodied state.) The whole thing was a prefiguration of events that are even yet future, and therefore could not have been a representation of anything that

was, in any sense, *then* in existence. Nor could it have been, had that been the case, what our Lord designed it to be, a specimen of His coming kingdom. It is only to be observed, in addition, that Moses and Elias were fit representatives of the two classes of saints, who shall inherit the kingdom, viz., those who shall have died before the Lord's coming—and those who shall, at His coming, be found alive on earth, and be changed "in a moment," without passing through the valley of death—Moses, whom the Lord "buried," being the representative of the former; and Elias, who had been rapt from earth, without dying, as fitly prefiguring the latter.

It has been also objected, that the views here maintained are inconsistent with the statement of our Lord to the thief on the cross—"to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This objection is plainly founded on the idea that the paradise here spoken of is the supreme heaven, (to which the current tradition transfers the souls of the righteous at death,)—but that it is *not* so, is evident from our Lord's express declaration to the contrary, in His conversation with Mary, in the interval *between* His Resurrection and Ascension—"I am *not* yet ascended to my Father." He had *died*, and had risen from the grave, but, notwithstanding, had not gone to His Father. Had He in any sense gone to Him at death, He could not, and would not, have used such language. But, besides, Scripture testifies that the Lord's soul went where it represents all believers' souls as going at death, viz., to Hades; (the invisible state)—

as, for example, "who shall *descend* into the deep? "that is, to *bring up* Christ from the dead"—(Rom. x. 7.) How can this be reconciled with the idea that His soul, and that of the thief, went to *heaven* at death? "Paradise" and "Hades" are certainly not synonyms. The former is always represented in Scripture, as the abode of happiness, to be entered upon (not at death, but) *after resurrection*: whereas Hades is uniformly represented as a state of silence, and darkness, to which the souls of believers are consigned *at death*—an object, therefore, not of desire, but aversion—as is evident from our Lord's own feelings respecting it, as expressed in the following words—"My flesh also shall "rest in hope, *for thou wilt not leave* my soul in Hades." This state, then, which was thus so the object of His own aversion, that He looked forward with "hope" to deliverance from it—declaring His confidence that His Father would "*not leave*" His soul there—could not possibly have been the object to which He directed the mind of the thief, as one of *hope*, and joyful expectation.* Thus much is plain, could we even not find a

* Our Lord's statement, that "the gates of Hades should not prevail against" His Church—viz: that Hades should not confine the souls of His people a moment longer than the period of His return, and the establishment of His promised kingdom, is further proof that such a place could not have been held forth by Him, as an object of desire and hope to the thief. While speaking of this promise we may observe, by the way, how strange it is, that it should have ever been used as an argument in favour of God's protection of His Church, in the *present* state, with which it has so manifestly no connexion at all. Indeed, the supposition that the

means of reconciling this place with what we have seen to be the teaching of the several passages already considered on this subject. Our object is to shew that there is no difficulty in the way of reconciling them, save that which unfounded tradition has interposed.

The key to the meaning of our Lord's words here is to be found in the terms of the dying request of the thief, which elicited them; in order to the due understanding of which it is indispensable to adopt a different rendering of the original from that given in the "authorized" translation, which is in this instance incorrect. The proper rendering is "*in thy kingdom,*" ("*ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου*" being the Greek—and not *εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου*, as it should be, to justify the present translation.) Thus rendered, the place is exactly parallel to Matt. xvi. 28, where the Greek "*ἐρχόμενον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ*" is properly translated thus—"coming *in His kingdom.*" A reference to the observations offered on this latter place, above, will shew that the period spoken of is that, when "the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels." The intermediate state, then, is, as in all the other cases adduced, altogether omitted here, as it *closes* with the Lord's coming. It is plain, that the thief had been instructed in the truth respecting that coming, and the "*kingdom*" then to be established,—and equally plain,

term "*gates*" could properly be used as a figure for the active enemies of the Church now, is absurd; while, as denoting the means of entering, or quitting, an *enclosure*, it is accurately appropriate to the sense in which it is here employed.

that he had heard nothing of any supposed state of bliss before that period; for, had he known of any such, how can his silence respecting it here be accounted for? Must he not necessarily, in that case, have referred to it, on this occasion, as a step to the further blessedness of the "kingdom" of which he speaks? His whole attention is absorbed by the anticipated glories of the "kingdom," and concentrated on *its* prospects. He had evidently no hope connected with any *pre*-resurrection condition. And, when it is further considered, that there is much reason to believe, that any instruction he had received had been imparted to him, (and probably in his last moments) by our Lord himself—the argument derived from his silence, as to any expectation of disembodied bliss, in any sense, or degree, powerfully confirms the views here maintained.

Our Lord's *response* to the dying request of the thief comes now to be considered—"Verily I say unto thee, "to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Bearing in mind the request which elicited this reply, and all the circumstances of the case, it is plain that our Lord must have meant in these words to signify to the thief, that his desire should be *granted*. Had that desire been in any sense unfounded, or its object unscriptural, and therefore unattainable, our Lord would never have permitted him, at such a time, and under such circumstances, to remain in error. We may therefore very safely assume, that in his reply He designed to express his sanction of the poor man's hopes, and to assure him of their fulfilment, at the time specified by him, viz., the

period of His "coming in His kingdom." It has already been shewn that "Paradise" is not the Scriptural term for the intermediate state, but is always represented as the abode of blessedness to be entered upon by the people of God, at the Resurrection, and therefore to be co-incident with the "coming" of the Lord "in His kingdom." When, then, our Lord assures the thief, that he should be with Him "in Paradise," He of course means in that "kingdom," the establishment of which is to accompany the introduction of His people to Paradise.

It only, then, remains to account for the introduction of the word "to-day." And this can give no difficulty to those who adopt the Scriptural view of the intermediate state, as one of utter, absolute, and positive unconsciousness; for, in that case, (as was said above, in considering the two passages of Paul's Epistles mainly relied on by the advocates of disembodied existence)—it would necessarily be, to the thief's apprehensions, an *immediate* passing, out of the wretched predicament in which his crimes had involved him, into the blessedness and glory of the "kingdom" he sought. The Scriptural doctrine, then, of the unconsciousness of the interval between death and resurrection, furnishes the simplest possible solution of the difficulty supposed to be involved in the passage before us.

There have been proposed one or two other means of meeting the supposed difficulty in question, but none of them appear to the writer to be satisfactory; or more than mere attempts to reconcile the language of this

place with the current tradition as to disembodied conscious existence—which being assumed as a theological axiom, it is deemed by those who admit it as such, a duty to try to reconcile with it this place, as well as others above-noticed. There has been suggested an expedient whereby the language may be rendered consistent, even as it stands, with the truth on the subject before us—viz., a mere change in the punctuation of the passage, thus—“to-day I say unto thee, thou shalt be with me in Paradise”—but one cannot see why our Lord should have used the word at all, if in that sense. The explanation above-offered is believed to be the only one that will meet the exigencies of the case. As such it is humbly proposed, though with the confidence inspired by the assurance of its claim to the sanction of the Word of God.

Another objection is founded on the circumstances of the parable (?) of Dives and Lazarus, which are said to be inconsistent with the doctrine of unconsciousness in the intermediate condition. It has often been observed that parables cannot be used as proofs of a doctrine, as not supplying sufficient foundation (considering their nature) on which to build or establish any such. And it is well that this is the conventional view of the matter, inasmuch as the parable before us is evidently irreconcilable with *any* side of the question. For, while the advocate of disembodied consciousness can point to the fact, of the departed desiring that his brethren *on earth* should be warned to avoid the place of torment in which he is represented as suffering, at the

same time, as proving the *truth* of their theory; the man who holds disembodied *unconsciousness* can point, with equal confidence, to the fact of Dives having a "*tongue*," in evidence of the *falsehood* of that theory, inasmuch as this fact is impossible to be reconciled with the idea of *disembodied* existence. *This* place, therefore, will not accommodate *either* party. The writer's own opinion is, that the great object of our Lord, in this instance, was to shew that though, in the providence of God, the righteous often suffer in this life, while the wicked are in temporal prosperity, the tables will be turned in the *eternal* state. He is quite aware that some of the circumstances of the parable seem inconsistent with this view; but when he recollects that *this* life, and the *eternal* life that is to succeed the Resurrection, are the *only* states of conscious existence assigned to man in the Word of God, it is impossible for him to understand it otherwise than as referring to the state of immortality which is every where in Scripture postponed to Resurrection, and to await that period for the *eclaircissement* of the difficulty involved in the parable (if it be one.)

It has been further objected, that the representation given in Rev. vi. 9, 10, proves the conscious existence of the departed in the intermediate state. The passage runs thus—"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and

avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Now, it is confessed that this place seems, *primâ facie*, to favour the idea of disembodied consciousness; but it is only thus that it gives it any countenance, inasmuch as the uniform testimony of Scripture is, as we have seen, against that theory. And, besides, the events here represented are yet future, none of the seals having been yet opened, in the sense here spoken of, though they may (at least some of them) have had a typical opening. The reasons for thus believing shall be furnished elsewhere, in the course of these essays, and shall therefore not be entered upon here.

But, the simple explanation of the place, (which though offered "last" is "not least," being obviously the true one) is, that by "souls" is meant their blood, which had been shed, and which is here represented as "crying with a loud voice" on God, to fulfil His promise, by avenging them of their murderers—just as *murder* is called a "*crying*" sin; and as is said to Cain, "the voice of thy brother's *blood crieth* to me from the "ground"—(Gen. iv. 10.) And according to what is written in 2 Esdras xv. 8, 9, (which, though not canonical Scripture, supplies an example of the same use of the terms here employed, and thus answers the purpose of illustration)—"behold, the innocent and righteous "*blood crieth* unto me, and the *souls* of the just complain continually. And, therefore, saith the Lord, I "will surely *avenge* them, and receive unto me all the "*innocent blood* from among them." The parallelism of these places is evident, and shews the sense in which

the passage now under review is to be understood, as furnishing no support to the theory of disembodied existence, but confirming the opposite views ; which it most decidedly does, when seen in the light reflected upon it from the various other places just adduced.

An additional objection drawn from the language of Heb. xii. vv. 22-24, remains to be noticed—"But ye
"are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the
"living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an
"innumerable company of angels, to the general assem-
"bly, and church of the first-born, which are written
"(enrolled) in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all,
"and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to
"Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant," &c. It is not necessary to dwell farther on this objection, than to observe that the way in which believers "are come
"unto Mount Sion,—the city of the living God, the
"heavenly Jerusalem, . . . the spirits of just
"men made perfect," &c., is, necessarily, in the *purpose* of God, these objects themselves being all even yet future, and synchronous with the Lord's coming, and kingdom,—according to the testimony of Scripture. They are *called*, in God's plainly-revealed purpose, to all that is here specified, and much more ; and are therefore here addressed, as though they had already attained to the inheritance reserved for them, in accordance with a not infrequent usage of the Word of God, which sometimes speaks of long-subsequent events as being even *past* ; as in the familiar case of the prediction of the humiliation of our Lord, in the 53rd Chapter

of Isaiah, wherein the most minute circumstances connected therewith, as (e. g.) that "He *made* His grave "with the wicked, and with the rich, in His death," are spoken of in the *past* tense, some seven hundred years before they were accomplished. There is, therefore, no difficulty in understanding as future the objects and events here announced in the *present* tense, when the whole tenor of Scripture demands such a reception of its evidence respecting them.

There remain one or two other places, which demand a passing notice, as they are by some supposed to militate against the views advocated in these pages. The first is 1 Pet. iv. 6—"For, for this cause was the "Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they "might be judged according to men in the flesh, but "live according to God in the spirit." There is not in these words the slightest ground for the notion which has been too rashly built upon them, that the "dead" here spoken of were preached to in the intermediate state. They are called "dead" by the Apostle, because they were so at the time of his inditing this Epistle, but they were alive when the Gospel was preached to them. There is, at least, nothing in the language of this place inconsistent with this position, while the supposing them to have been "dead," when preached to, contradicts the uniform testimony of the Word respecting the disembodied state, and therefore cannot be maintained. There is no difficulty connected with the explanation here proposed, as it agrees with the testimony of Scripture which the other views oppose, and

has thus a fair claim on our assent. The meaning of the latter part of the passage seems to be, that they were, according to the penalty denounced against sin, subjected to death "in the flesh," but should yet, according to the provision of God, in Christ, "live in the Spirit," i. e. in the "spiritual body" of the Resurrection; as the contrast here seems to be between the "body of sin and death," and the "spiritual body" just mentioned, in the former of which the believer is "judged" to temporal death, while in the latter he will be introduced to eternal life. In fact, the natural life, of which they were deprived by death, is to be succeeded by the spiritual life of the Resurrection, so that it may be said of them, as of our Lord himself, after He arose from the dead, 'In that they died they died unto (because of) sin, once; but in that they shall live, (which can only be in resurrection) they shall live unto God.' That it is not what is meant by spiritual existence, or living to God, in the divine life, in the present state, that is the subject of this place, is manifest from its being the Redeemer's *post-resurrection* state that is here spoken of, and not that which He lived "in the flesh,"—though that had been, in *His* case, pre-eminently a "living unto God."

Light is also thrown on this place by the fact, that the resurrection of the people of God is always represented, in His Word, as being indispensable to their being, in the best sense, His people. To take one or two examples of this. In a passage already commented on, (Heb. xi. 16) it is said, with reference to the Resur-

rection-inheritance of the heavenly Jerusalem, reserved for believers—"Wherefore God is not ashamed to be "called their God, *for* He hath prepared for them a "city."* Again, in another place, which has also been already observed upon, it is said, in connexion with the very point here made, (*viz.*, that the Resurrection of believers is necessary to their being acknowledged by God as His people) that "God is not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living*," which is adduced by our Lord, as a proof of the necessity of their Resurrection,† whereby His being "their God" shall be made good to them.

The passage in Chapter iii. 18, 20, of the same Epistle, is also sometimes relied on by the other side, but without more reason than in the preceding case. There is more or less difficulty attached to this place. But in no way does it contradict the Scriptures already quoted; for it is plain, in the first place, that our Lord's part in the matter, whatever be the meaning of the passage, was performed *after* His resurrection, and not during His continuance in Hades. The statement that the objects of His address, on the occasion in question, were "the spirits in prison, who sometime were dis-

* God will not accept any thing which is imperfect, imperfection being the result of sin; and therefore accounts nothing that has fallen properly His, till it be restored, at "the times of restitution of all things." Another reason this, why man should not be admitted to His presence, till perfected in the resurrection of the body—if, indeed, it were right to use the term "man" of that which has no body, which it is not.

† See remarks on this passage, in its proper place above.

"obedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited "in the days of Noah," shews that the common opinion, which understands "spirits" here to signify dead men, or *men at all*, is erroneous—for, the mention of "the days of Noah," as the period of the "disobedience" of the "spirits" spoken of, identifies them as the *angels* whose sin is specified in Gen. vi. 1-7. We say "angels," because it is utterly impossible to acquiesce in the prevalent notion, that by "Sons of God" are meant good men, and by "daughters of men" are to be understood bad women, without violating every fair principle of exposition. "Sons of God" mean angels, in scriptural phraseology, as may be seen throughout the Old Testament. "Daughters of men" signify women. And the illicit intercourse between these heterogeneous creatures explains the fact, (which could not otherwise be accounted for) that their progeny were "Giants,"—for such a supposed result of the union of good men with bad women, would be absurd. It was the unnatural connexion between angels and women that produced it. Besides, the common opinion is untenable on the further ground, that it makes all the *goodness* to be on the side of the *men*, and all the *evil* on the part of the *women*. Supposing that both parties spoken of had been (as certainly as they were not) human beings, could it be accounted for, that no *good women* are said to have been united to *bad men*? This alone suffices to condemn the prevalent notion on the subject.

The same Apostle, in his 2nd Epistle ii. 4, speaking

of the same event, distinctly calls those who were termed in Genesis "sons of God," "*angels*"—"For, if God "spared not the *angels* that sinned, but cast them down "to Tartarus, (*ταρταρώσας*) and delivered them into chains "of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," &c. The mention of the preservation of Noah from the judgment incurred by the sin of the angels, shews that the subject here is the same as in the other places.* It is evident, too, that JUDE refers to it, in vv. 6, 7—"And the angels "which kept not their first estate, (*ἀρχήν*—principality, "marg.) but *left their own habitation*, he hath reserved "in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom, and "Gomorrhah, and the cities about them, in *like* manner, "giving themselves over to fornication, and going after "strange flesh," &c. Here we have a plain confirmation of our position, that angels, and not men, are spoken of as "sons of God," in the place above considered; and that their sin was that already stated, of "leaving their own habitation," (which good men need not have done, in order to marry bad women, as there are generally good and bad, of both sexes, to be met with everywhere)—and going after strange flesh—*i.e.*, an unnatural connexion with creatures of another kind. The reference to the case of Sodom and Gomorrhah still farther supports this view—but the sense of the place is much impaired, and its connexion lost, by the translators having omitted to give any rendering of the

* It was in Noah's day that the fall of the angels took place, as the preceding quotation shews.

important word *τούτους*. The supply of this defect is necessary to the full understanding of the passage, as well as in the way of shewing its connexion with the other places adduced. The proper rendering is as follows—"Even as Sodom, and Gomorrah, and the cities "about them, in like manner *with these* (*τὸν ὅμοιον τούτους τρόπον*) giving themselves over to fornication, "and going after strange flesh," &c. The word "these" plainly refers to the angels, as both the sense and the gender require.* It is plain, then, that the traditional notion of "sons of God" meaning good men, is unfounded,—and that the sin of the angels was their unnatural intercourse with women—properly a going after *strange* flesh, which the mere union of a believer with an unbeliever (however incongruous and discordant in itself) would not have been—being more properly to be characterized as a difference *in spirit*, than in "flesh." And, besides, the reference to the sin which led to the destruction of "Sodom and Gomorrah," proves the erroneousness of the opinion that the union of good men and bad women is meat in Gen. vi., as that was not the crime of those cities at all, but the unnatural connexion referred to in Rom. i. 27.

Having now considered the direct Scriptural evidence in favour of our position, as well as the principal objections offered to it—it only remains to submit some general remarks on the subject, and to request attention to some of the consequences necessarily involved in the

* Those who may wish to see the subject treated at length, and most satisfactorily, may consult Mr. Maitland's "Eruvin," a work containing some valuable essays on a variety of subjects.

current tradition respecting it. In the first place, it seems to the writer, that the commonly-received opinion of disembodied conscious existence practically ignores the great truth on which hinges the whole Christian system, viz., the Resurrection.* For, if immortality can exist irrespectively of the Resurrection, (and the common opinion maintains that it not only can, but does) what more can a believer want, or desire? To be sure, it may be said—‘yes, but we look for an increase of happiness at the resurrection of the body from the grave, when the whole man (“spirit, and soul, and body,”) shall have his perfect consummation and bliss, the happiness entered on at death being imperfect.’ To this our simple reply is, to not merely repeat what has been already abundantly proved,—that the Scriptures not only ignore the dogma of a partial, or any, conscious bliss at death, but most expressly, and emphatically inculcate the contrary—but that besides, every where in the Word of God we find the highest attainable bliss, and perfection of happiness, associated with immortality—so that if *it* be entered upon at death, (as the common opinion has it) then the Intermediate state cannot be (as they say) one of imperfection in any sense.

* So thought that eminent man, Justin Martyr, in the second century; when, speaking of some “*heretics*” of his day, he says—“they even deny any resurrection, *but* allege that *souls go to Heaven at death*”—manifestly shewing that, in his estimate, the going to Heaven of souls at death (had it been true) would have rendered resurrection unmeaning, as in truth it would—for, such is the force of the word “*but*,” in the sentence. This “*heresy*” is *more consistent* than the now-common notion on the subject among professing *Christians*.

Immortality and imperfection cannot co-exist. It is impossible. If a believer be introduced to immortality at the period of his death, he is then introduced also to the perfection of happiness and glory; and what additional benefit *could* he, in that case, derive from the resurrection of his body from the grave? None, possibly. But the Resurrection is always held forth in the Word of God, as the very turning-point of the church's hopes—the key-stone of the Christian arch—of which it may be said, (as was said by Luther, of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as the criterion of a church's state,) that it is the test of a standing or falling Christianity. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, "then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is vain "also." Resurrection precedes immortality, which cannot exist independently of it. No resurrection, no immortality—no resurrection, no conscious existence, in any sense—no resurrection, no awaking from the "sleep" of death—no resurrection, no presence with the Lord, in any degree, or of any kind—is the plain, and repeated teaching of the Word of God, as has been shewn at large above. A dogma which thus contradicts the teaching of Scripture, cannot be of God.

In the next place, were the common opinion correct, Judgment, as well as Resurrection, would be unmeaning. To what purpose a "Day of Judgment," if at death the destiny of each individual be fixed? And this must be the case, according to the notion we combat, were it well founded—for, if he were not to be

admitted to the kingdom of God, he would not, on the shewing of its advocates themselves, be admitted into the supposed introductory state at death. If qualified for the one, he is qualified for the other. And, this is not all. For, if the *believer's* condition for eternity be thus so fixed at death, that he then, at once, enters upon the enjoyment (in any sense or degree) of his reward of grace; then, by parity of reasoning, so must be the *unbeliever's* too, when, judging from analogy, he is introduced to a state of comparative suffering of punishment;* in which case, so far as both are concerned, "*cui bono*" a "day of judgment," the decisions of which will have been thus anticipated, by the consignment of each, at death, to his destiny?

And how, again, would this notion of adjudication at death, agree with the Word of God, which assures us, that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the quick *and dead*?" How, too, with our Lord's own words, that a day is coming wherein "all that are "in the graves shall hear His voice, and come forth," &c.? Not that these places confirm the common notion of the "day of judgment" being a day in the ordinary sense of the term; for the Scriptures always represent that "day" as occupying the whole interval between the Lord's coming, and the period of His "delivering "up the kingdom to God, even the Father"—nor that they sanction the prevalent opinion of but one common Resurrection of believers and unbelievers, which is plainly opposed to all Scriptural evidence. They are

* This would look very like Purgatory.

here brought forward, merely for the purpose of confirming the views here maintained, as they do very plainly—for they shew that there is no judgment previous to that which shall be entered upon at His coming, when “the *dead*” believers, as well as the then living saints, shall be awarded their portion; (for the dead *unbelievers* shall not be raised for judgment, till the period of His “delivering up the kingdom to God”)—nor any immortality, or conscious existence, for His departed saints, till the Resurrection that shall accompany His coming, when they shall be caught up to meet the Lord,” (*εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ Κυρίου*) and return with Him to the earth, after the infliction of the predicted vengeance on the then living ungodly inhabitants of the prophetic earth, in the judgment of the quick.

It has already been remarked, that the “enemy of all righteousness” has found his account in the perversions of truth which have been adopted on his suggestion—and the present instance shews that it was not “for nothing,” (as he himself says of Job’s service of God,) that he invented the notion of disembodied existence, which he saw to be indispensable to the insinuation of some of his devices. Had he not succeeded in putting out of sight the plain teaching of the Word of God respecting the Intermediate State, he never could have foisted on the Church the dogma of the “Invocation of Saints.”* Had the plainly-revealed truth, that

* In here adverting to what he believes to be some of the errors of a particular denomination of professing Christians, the writer would desire to be understood as recognising the proper distinction

"the dead know not anything," not been first got rid of by his subtle device of disembodied existence, that notion would never have met with a patient hearing. It is also only on the ground of the same device of the enemy, that the notion of a Purgatory rests. And it is just by the simple assertion of the truth on *this* subject, that both these errors can be most effectually and irresistibly encountered and overthrown. There are no means of opposing error half so powerful as the exhibition of the truth, in its Scriptural simplicity—none on which God's blessing can be so consistently supplicated, or more confidently calculated on. And it is just because, in the controversial discussions which have occasionally taken place, the testimony of Scripture on *this* subject has been ignored on *both* sides, that comparatively so little has been accomplished in the way of the establishment of truth, and refutation of error. *Both*

between *persons* and *principles*—and as entertaining no other feeling towards his fellow-men, of every denomination, than one of the most sincere regard, and good-will—but, just in proportion to the reality of that regard is his feeling of regret, that any of them should be found in any respect committed to erroneous views of subjects of plain revelation; and his desire to be instrumental in directing their attention to the deliverances of the Word of God in such cases. He is persuaded that the Faith of men generally, of *all* denominations, is *more a matter of inheritance, than of conviction*—and that, as he has elsewhere said, men usually go to the Bible, rather for the purpose of looking for, (and, if they can, finding,) their faith there, than with the object of testing it by that standard; to ascertain whether it be correct, and acting accordingly. He desires, in this respect, to act on the golden rule of "doing to others, as he would be done by"—for, his object being the knowledge of Truth, he has always been thankful for the Scriptural correction of any of his own errors.

sides holding the notion of disembodied existence, the only point of controversy between them is necessarily limited to the question of the whereabouts and conscious condition of the departed. Whereas, were the "traditions of men" abandoned on these subjects, and the plain teaching of the Word, and that alone, maintained, the hands of the controversialist would be most powerfully strengthened, and the vindication of the truth secured. The ground would thus be taken from under the feet of the advocate of error, by the uniform testimony of Scripture, as to the utter unconsciousness (and thus virtual non-existence) of the departed people of God, throughout the whole interval between their death and resurrection. Such an argument would be overwhelming.

It is a curious circumstance, in the history of the case before us, that notwithstanding the opposition so generally and naturally manifested towards every peculiar dogma of the Church of Rome, by those who are not of her Communion—the Church of Christ, of every denomination, should yet have so entirely bowed to her dictation in this matter, as to admit, on her assumed authority, a notion so plainly opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, as we have seen that of disembodied existence to be. For, though *individuals* may have held (as we know they did) the now-common opinion on this subject, it had never been, so far as the writer is aware, propounded as an Article of Faith, till so late a date as the Fifteenth Century, when it was so defined by the Council of Florence, (A. D. 1478)—so that it does not

possess even the questionable credit, which some errors do, of a respectable antiquity to recommend it. Not that any extent of time, or even universal assent of mankind, could convert an error into a truth ; for, though it were of ever such extended duration, truth is older still ; and in the case now under consideration, as in others, it will be found, that “ the nearer the fountain, the purer the stream ;” all Christian antiquity rejecting, as with one voice, the now-common opinion of the Intermediate State, and adopting the plainly-declared Scriptural account thereof. “ The hoary head “ is a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of right “ eousness ”—but the mere circumstance of the antiquity of a notion is insufficient to establish its claim to the sanction of Divine authority.* In the case before us, however, there is not even the poor excuse of a far-reaching antiquity to plead, in palliation of so plain a departure

* And, after all, antiquity, though so honoured *in words*, is not really regarded so much for its own sake, as because of its supposed sanction of our respective views, inasmuch as the *earliest* writers of the Christian Church are seldom appealed to, though we have in abundance their writings well authenticated. The advocates of the Church of Rome, for instance, scarcely ever venture to go higher than about the Fifth Century—the Fathers of which date, and thence downward, are more favourable to her views, than those of an earlier date. It was the present universally-respected Bishop of Cashel (if the writer's memory fail him not) who said, when advocating the Protestant cause (as Rector of Powerscourt) at a discussion held in Carlow, many years since—that, as the rev. gentlemen on the other side had referred so much at large to the *Fathers*, he would take the liberty of referring to the *Grandfathers* of the Church ; which he did, by bringing forward some most apposite passages from the writers of really primitive times.

from the teaching of the Word of God, as is involved in the current tradition respecting it.

One of the worst features of the erroneous view of this question is, that it seems to imply a something like distrust, or, at the least, doubt, of the power of God to restore to existence a being once so entirely deprived of life, as to be reduced to a state of practical non-existence. The resurrection is represented in Scripture, as one of the highest efforts of Divine power, as has been already shewn. But, in what sense could it be so, if the common notion were well founded, that at death *the soul lives on without dying?* In that case the power of God would be to a great extent shorn of its glory. For, it would require the exercise of far less, apparently, to merely reinvest the soul, (which had, according to this theory, never died,) with another *covering*, or body, than that in which it had sojourned in the fleshly tabernacle, than to re-create a being whose existence, in every sense, had been destroyed; its constituent elements having been severed at death—"the spirit (or breath) returning to God, who gave it"—the soul being consigned to Hades, there to abide, in utter insensibility (and thus virtual non-existence) till the period of its predicted deliverance therefrom, at the Lord's coming—and the body committed to the grave till the Resurrection, which shall be synchronous with the deliverance of the soul just mentioned. When these two latter parts shall have been again brought together, by the almighty power of God—the soul no longer weighed down by the "body of sin and death," but "clothed

upon" with the "house from Heaven," the incorruptible, "spiritual body" of the Resurrection—and He shall have anew "breathed into the nostrils the breath of life," the man shall stand forth in all the conscious dignity of Immortality—a noble and everlasting monument of the wisdom, the goodness, and the power of God—the climax and the triumph of Omnipotence.

And, again, the notion of intermediate existence, and disembodied consciousness, virtually does away with the penalty of sin,* and thus contradicts one of the first principles of the Christian religion. For, if (as the advocates of this theory allege) the *soul* be the *man*—if individuality and personality belong exclusively to *it*, and the body be merely the outward covering, and not part and parcel of the man—and if, as is further alleged, the soul be *immortal*, then it is evident that the individual does not die. He merely lays aside the fleshly tabernacle, which he no longer requires, and *rids himself of its incumbrance*. If the body *cannot* die, (which is evident, as it does not live), and the soul *does not* die, (as is alleged), is it not manifest, that *nothing* of man dies? Resurrection is always connected with a raising again *to life*—but, of what? Certainly neither body nor soul can be restored to an existence, which the former never had, and the latter is

* God had denounced the penalty in these terms—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*"—but man says, 'oh! no, we shall live on, in even a better state, and merely throw off the present corruptible body,' &c. How could we more completely contradict the Word of God on the subject?

supposed to have never lost. Then, according to the prevailing notion, *nothing is restored to life*—and what then comes of the repeated testimony of Scripture, as to Resurrection so necessarily preceding immortality, that the latter cannot be entered upon, till after the former shall have prepared the way for its introduction—death reigning uncontrolled, till at the Resurrection it is exchanged for life eternal and immortal? It is repeated—that if the soul be the man, and that that be immortal, it is absurd to say that the man dies at all. It has been already shewn, that the body cannot die, not having ever lived. *Man* lives, and *man* dies. But man is the integral, composed of “spirit, and soul, and body,” the dissolution and disintegration of which elements of his constitution is termed death.

And here we are consequently constrained by the necessity of the case, to go farther than even this; and to say that the notion in question involves, as is manifest, no less than the denial of the *Redeemer's* death, and of course, in that case, the only atonement for sin. The writer is fully aware of the responsibility he incurs by hazarding this statement. But he cannot allow such a consideration to influence him, to the withholding of what he believes to be necessarily involved in the common opinion on the subject. He repeats, then—that the virtual denial of the Redeemer's death, and the only atonement for sin thereby effected, seems to him to follow by logical consequence from the admission of the above premises. For, if the soul of *man* be in itself immortal, then so must have been the soul of the Re-

deemer—in which case He could not have died, or laid down His life—for, His personality being bound up (as is alleged), with His soul, and that being, according to this theory, immortal, how could He in that case have died at all? Of course, such a conclusion would be as abhorrent from the feelings of every one of his brethren in Christ, as from those of the writer; but he sees no way of escape from it, except in the abandonment of the premises from which it necessarily flows. If he merely laid aside, at death, the outward *covering*, the body; and in his immortal essence (as is said), still continued to exist, that alleged immortal part constituting His personality, how, or in what sense, can he be said to have died? and what would be the meaning of those almost numberless places, which lay such stress and emphasis on His Resurrection? If the theory in question were true, there would seem to have been nothing to be gained by that event, on which the Word of God yet makes the whole Christian system to depend.

As has been before remarked, the Resurrection even of mankind at large would be an unmeaning thing, if immortality were entered upon at death. Scripture always sets forth Resurrection as indispensable to life, (because a *body* is necessary to man's existence); but, if man has not died, (which must be the case, if the part of him which constituted his personality (himself) lived on, through, and after, and notwithstanding death), of what use could the Resurrection of his body be? It seems a strange inconsistency to say that, while a man is, all through his life, (in the body of flesh and blood),

merely '*mortal*,' and daily and hourly *exposed* to loss of life; yet, when he actually *passes under* the hand of death, he is then, *ipso facto* immortalized! then death is life! and mortality immortality! then, in *life* he is, as it were, *dead*, being *mortal*—and in *death* he is *alive*, being *immortal*—and, to make "confusion worse confounded," he is said to be, while in the present state, both mortal and immortal, at one and the same time—the part of him supposed to be mortal being a part which never had life, and therefore *could not* die! so that this theory requires our assent to the monstrous proposition, that, as while man is *alive*, he is *mortal*: so, when *dead*, he is *immortal*! In other words, that while *alive*, he is *dying*, but when *dead* he is *living*! Such a notion we believe to be as plainly opposed to all sound philosophy, and common sense, as it has been shewn to be to all scriptural teaching. It is exposed to the reproof addressed by the angels to the women at the sepulchre—"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

It may also well be asked, as it has repeatedly been, of the advocates of conscious presence, (in any sense, or degree), with the Lord, in heaven, during the disembodied state, what they will do with the cases of Lazarus, Dorcas, and the various other parties whose restoration to life from the state of death is recorded in Scripture? Will they allege that they were brought back from the enjoyment of even partial bliss, in the Lord's presence, in heaven, to sojourn again, in bodies of flesh and blood, on earth; subject, of course, to the

trials and sufferings necessarily incidental to such a state, from which they had, respectively, been only just released by death? Surely, this will not be maintained by any one; being absolutely incredible, and, we confidently add, *impossible*. Taking the scriptural account of the intermediate state, there is no difficulty whatever involved in the fact of their return to the present state, at the instance of our Lord himself, in some of the cases, and of His Apostles acting under His authority, and by His imparted power, in the others.

The inquiry sometimes instituted, as to their subsequent history, cannot be profitable, inasmuch as nothing on the subject is revealed. One thing is certain, that they cannot have died again, as that would contradict the Word, which says that "it is appointed unto men *once* to die"—and another thing is equally plain, viz.: that they cannot have been taken up into heaven; as otherwise they would have been favoured with a lot that did not fall to the share of any of the eminent believers enumerated in Heb. xi., including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, according to our Lord's own statement, (Matt. viii. 11), *shall* inherit "the kingdom of God;" while he yet, nearly two thousand years after their departure hence, says to Nicodemus, "*no* man hath ascended up to heaven," (John iii. 13,) and he could with equal truth have added, '*nor ever shall*'—for "the kingdom of heaven" to be established *on earth*, at our Lord's coming, (as shall be shewn in a following essay—and not the present kingdom *in heaven*), is the inheritance spoken of. It

would be, at best, but a fruitless speculation—an attempt to be “wise above what is written”—to endeavour to ascertain the present whereabouts, and condition, of Lazarus, Dorcas, Enoch, Elijah, and the saints whose Resurrection accompanied the death of our Lord, as well as various others above alluded to. These were exceptional cases. One thing is certain—that it will eventually be found that in these instances nothing has occurred inconsistent with the uniform tenor of the Word of God, as to the intermediate condition of the departed. We need entertain no apprehensions as to the consistency and integrity of that Word, the vindication of which He will keep in His own hands, where we may safely leave it, nor be afraid to trust Him out of our sight.

It has been before observed, that Scripture always holds forth immortality as the subject of *promise*. How, then, can a man be *now* immortal? For example, “And this is the *promise* that He hath *promised* us, “even *eternal life*.” (1 John, ii. 25.) But, to have “eternal life” is to be immortal. If we be *now* immortal, then we *now* have “*eternal life*”—yet here it is the subject of “promise”—we have it, indeed, in the sense of having the certain reversion of it ensured to us—but do not yet possess it in fact. How, then, it is again asked, can a man who has now only the “promise” of “eternal life,” be at the same time in actual *bonâ fide* possession of that immortality which is its synonyme? Can he both have the object itself in hand, and have merely a “promise” of it at a future period, at one and

the same time? Is it not written in the Word, "what
 "a man *hath*, why doth he yet *hope for*?"* (Rom.
 viii. 24.) And this reference is peculiarly apposite here,
 inasmuch as the "hope" spoken of is that of the "re-
 demption of the body," in the Resurrection, as the
 immediately preceding verse shews.

Again, it is thus written, "who will render to every
 "man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient
 "continuance in well-doing, *seek for* (ζητοῦσι) glory,
 "and honour, and *immortality*, (He will render) eter-
 "nal life." (Rom. ii. 6, 7.) This passage is exactly
 parallel to the other, and both could without any diffi-
 culty be confirmed by abundant, and equally plain
 testimony of Scripture. A man in possession of "im-
 mortality" surely cannot be said to be "*seeking*" that
 which he *has*. It also agrees with the various other
 places adduced, in connecting the entrance upon "im-
 mortality," (as it is called in one part of the sentence,)
 and "eternal life," (as it is termed in another,) with
 "the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous
 "judgment of God;" (v. 5) and therefore not with the
 period of death, as the current tradition has it. The

* Such places as John iii. 36—"He that believeth on the Son
hath everlasting life," in no way contradict this—for, in such cases
 it is evidently meant, that eternal life is secured, in reversion, to the
 believer—just as we have seen (above) examples of future things
 spoken of as even *past*, from the certainty of their accomplishment
 at the future period fixed in the Divine purpose—as, for instance,
 the case (already adduced elsewhere) of the minutely circumstan-
 tial detail of our Lord's humiliation, given in Isaiah liii., seven
 hundred years before the events took place.

"day of judgment" being thus co-incident with the Resurrection, this place corroborates those considered above, as to the necessary connexion between the rising of the body from the grave, and the entrance into "immortality," or "eternal life." No putting on of immortality, till the Resurrection, and therefore no "eternal life" till then.

Much light is reflected on this subject from the consideration of the figure invariably employed in Scripture, to represent the state of the departed in the interval between death and resurrection—the imagery of the Word of God being always selected with a view to the rendering more easy of comprehension the respective subjects to which it refers. The figures employed are always taken from objects perfect in their kind—and therefore, when our Lord and His Apostles employ, as they always do, the figure of "*sleep*" to represent the Intermediate condition of the departed, they do not, of course, intend the fitful, restless, intermittent snatches of slumber, (if it can be so called) of the fever-patient; but the sound, dreamless, uninterrupted, and invigorating repose, which is characteristic of health of body, and peace of mind—the "*mens sana, in corpore sano*." In such a case as the latter, we ask, is "*sleep*" a state of *conscious existence*?* To this question it is impossible,

* The following extract from a valuable work by the Rev. Reginald Courtenay, (now Bishop of Kingston) dedicated (if the writer's memory be not at fault) to the present Archbishop of Dublin, is much to the point—"If the torpor of *sleep*, which is merely a partial *suspension* of vital energy, attended by no disso-

consistently with experience, to reply in the affirmative—as every one knows that the contrary is the fact—and that sound “*sleep*” (properly so-called) is a state of *the most entire and perfect unconsciousness*. Indeed, so completely is it so, that, (as has been before said) were a man standing beside the bed of one in a sound sleep, with his hand uplifted to strike him dead, he not only could not raise his arm, in self-defence, but not even his voice to supplicate his mercy, because of his utter unconsciousness, not merely of the dangerous predicament in which he would thus be placed, but even of his own existence. He, (in the language of Scripture elsewhere used, as descriptive of the condition of the dead,) “knows not *any* thing.” He is, in such a case, in a state of perfect insensibility; as cannot be denied. And can we imagine, that when the Word of God invariably, without any exception, uses *this* figure to represent the condition of the dead, it would yet, in opposition to this, teach (as it is said to do) that they are yet consciously present with the Lord, in heaven?

lution, but, on the contrary, strengthening the body, and preparing it for fresh activity, can thus paralyze all the mental functions, it is not too much to suppose that the torpor of *death*, which instantly and utterly *destroys* the vital energy, has an influence on the functions of the mind, no less complete in extent, and the duration of which who shall determine, unaided by the express word of Him who made both body and soul?” The whole work, from which this extract was made some years since by the writer, is extremely interesting, as well as most valuable, as exhausting every phase of the subject, and will well repay perusal.

It is impossible to believe this, as Scripture cannot contradict itself.

It can scarcely be necessary to adduce examples of the use of this figure in the Word, to express the nature of the intermediate state of believers. A few specimens, however, may be adduced. Many instances of such use of the figure in the Old Testament will occur to those who are familiar with it, but we shall confine our quotations to the New. And first we shall place our Lord's words, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*; but I go, "that I may awake him out of *sleep*. Then said His "disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit "Jesus spake of his *death*; but they thought that He "had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said "Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is *dead*."* There is no contradiction between this place and that in which our Lord is again the speaker, (Matt. ix. 24)—"the "maid is not dead, but *sleepeth*"—for there He addresses himself to *their apprehensions*, that she was in such a sense dead, as not to live again. He knew her to be only in the sleep of death, from which He could himself raise her up, as He afterwards did. They would seem to have not believed the doctrine of the Resurrection at all, for "they laughed Him to scorn," when He spoke of its being a "sleep" from which she should be awakened. Her father, on the other hand, expressed his confidence in the Lord's power to raise her from the dead, having accompanied his request that He should visit her, by a declaration to that effect—"My daughter

* John xi. 11-13.

"is even now *dead* ; but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall *live*."

Again, in Matthew xxvii. 52, it is written, that "many bodies of the saints which *slept*, arose." This does not mean that the bodies slept,* which would be absurd, as they had never been awake—just as, never having lived, they could not die. The original puts it beyond the possibility of question, by the grammatical construction of the sentence—"πολλὰ σωματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων"—literally, many bodies of those who slept. In 1 Cor. xi. 30, it is said, "for this cause many are "weak, and sickly, and many *sleep*," i.e., are dead. Again, in Chap. xv. 51, it is written, "We shall not "all *sleep*, but we shall all be changed," i.e., all shall not have died, before the period of the Lord's coming, and "the resurrection of the just," which is the subject of this chapter. There shall be a generation of believers then on earth, in the body of flesh and blood, who shall be given their glorious bodies, without having passed through the gates of death at all. Again, in 1 Thess. iv. 13-15, the term "sleep" is three times applied to departed believers, in a way that cannot be mistaken, or misunderstood—"them who are *asleep*"—(v. 13)—"them also which *sleep* in Jesus"—(v. 14)—"them "which are *asleep*"—(v. 15.) The now-general reception of the notion of disembodied existence has led to the insertion, in Ps. xc. 3-5, of a supplemental word, (supposed to be necessary to give sense to the place, as it has no equivalent in the Hebrew.)—"Thou turnest

* Which yet, strange as the notion is, has actually been alleged.

"man to destruction, . . . they are *as* asleep," &c. But, so far from the supplemental word "*as*" being, as the translators conceived, necessary to the sense of the passage, it *mars* its sense, and destroys the harmony that would otherwise subsist between this place and the various other Scriptures adduced. The original requires that it should read thus—"they are *asleep*"—and so does the analogy of revelation. While speaking of this place we may remark, by the way, that the Book of Psalms contains several instances of the use of the figure of sleep, as significantly descriptive of the disembodied state of the saints, as do various other portions of the Old Testament.

Though the only consideration of any real importance, or moment, in the matter, be to ascertain the proper answer to the inquiry, 'what saith the Scripture?' and while it is trusted, that *its* teaching respecting it has been pretty fully discussed in the preceding pages; it may be well also to shew that the Church of England, as in other things, generally, so also in this, is the faithful expositor of the Word of God, reflecting its light in her Creeds, Liturgy, &c.—which will be found to connect, as plainly as that Word does, immortality and eternal life, with the Resurrection, which she makes indispensable to the attainment, or rather, existence of them. A few examples of her views on the subject shall be furnished, as fair specimens of her general teaching respecting it.

In each of the three Creeds, which are incorporated in her services, she most distinctly recognises the *order*

contended for in this essay, by placing the Resurrection *before* "eternal life," in point of time; which is of importance in the matter in hand, inasmuch as their several articles are arranged in the proper order of sequence of the events which form their respective subjects. The Creed commonly called the Apostles', after enumerating the various successive events connected with the *faith* of the Church, from the birth of the Saviour, in the due order of their occurrence, as *recorded* in the Word, winds up with the recognition of her "blessed *hope*," in the order of the events *predicted* in the Word—viz., "the resurrection of the body, *and*" (as the consequence of that) "the life everlasting." It is to be observed here, that the notion of disembodied existence, of any kind, or in any degree, is utterly ignored in this Symbol—which could not possibly have been the case, had the framers of it known any thing of such an article of faith. They are silent upon it because they had just expressed, in one of the articles preceding the two now before us, their belief that the Lord "shall come to judge the quick *and the dead*;" so that the latter could not, in their estimation, have been previously adjudged to even partial bliss, as the common opinion requires to be believed.

The Nicene creed, after enumeration of the events specified in the preceding case, and in the same order, concludes as follows—"And I look for the Resurrection "of the dead, *and*," (as the consequence) "the life of "the world to come." Here we find the same order of sequence observed, while the phrase "the life everlast-

ing" of the former creed, is changed into "the life of the world *to come*," making the case, if possible, still stronger. Here, again, too, as in the former case, there is no mention of an intermediate state of existence; and this is the more remarkable, as this Symbol was compiled at a much later date than the other, viz., in the Fourth Century. So that we have in this fact evidence, that the dogma of disembodied existence was necessarily then unknown.

The remaining creed, called the Athanasian, though differing from the others in some points, agrees with them on this subject, concluding thus—"He shall come to judge the quick *and the dead*. At whose coming all men shall *rise again* with their bodies; and they that have done good shall go into *life everlasting*," &c. Here again we find the same connexion between Resurrection and eternal life; and the same order observed—the former necessarily preceding, and introducing the latter. We also find in this Creed the same silence on the subject of the supposed disembodied state, as characterized the previous two. Not even the most remote hint of the existence of any such condition, or anything even like it, or that could be mistaken for it.

And now, that these three Symbols have been examined, and found to concur in their testimony on the point before us, in confirmation of what we have seen to be the uniform teaching of Scripture on the subject, we ask, *how* will the advocates of intermediate consciousness, and *pre-resurrection* partial bliss, in the

presence of the Lord, *account* for this total silence of the Creeds as to any such thing as disembodied existence, and reconcile this fact with *their* views of the subject? With *our* views the fact of their silence respecting it is consistent, and intelligible—inasmuch as the Creeds are founded on the Bible—and, as *it* ignores any such state, or condition, so, of course, do *they*—but, how will those who adopt the idea of disembodied conscious existence explain the fact?—We pause for a reply.

We now proceed to inquire into the language of the Liturgy respecting it, and trust to be able to shew, that in this part of her teaching the Church does not contradict that of her Creeds, but is at one with herself, in consistent opposition to the dogma of *pre-resurrection*, conscious existence of the departed. And first, we turn to the concluding prayer of both Morning and Evening Service, which thus closes—“granting us in *this* world knowledge of thy truth, and in *the world to come* life everlasting.” This is plain enough, as to the Church’s views on the subject. She supplicates, as her *present* portion, the knowledge of the truth, and as the object of her *hope*, “life everlasting,” to be brought to her, (not at death, but) in “the world to come.”* The supposed intermediate state is here again omitted, and her expectation made to centre in the kingdom of God, which is meant by “the world to come,” (*τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν*—see Heb. ii. 5,) a phrase never applied in Scripture to the supreme heavens, nor to any other than

* That is, not a world to which we are to be taken, at death, but which is to be brought to us, at the coming of the Lord.

that state on earth, which shall be ushered in by the Resurrection.

The whole Collect for the First Sunday in Advent, is so peculiarly to our purpose, that we could not do justice to the subject, did we not quote it at length—
 “Almighty God, give us grace, that we may cast away
 “the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of
 “light, now in the time of *this mortal life*, in which thy
 “son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility;
 “that, in the last day, when he shall *come again*, in His
 “glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the
 “dead, *we may rise to the life immortal*, through Him,”
 &c. It would be impossible to more distinctly contradict the figment of present immortality, so generally insisted on, than this Collect does. If the object were to devise language most expressive of the erroneousness of the common notion on this subject, where *could* any be found more emphatically condemnatory of it, than that of this prayer? The language so plainly and pointedly contrasts “*this mortal life*,” with “the life immortal,” to which the people of God are to “*rise*,” at the time of *His coming* in His glory, to judgment, that the sentiments of the compilers of the Liturgy cannot be mistaken. They manifestly held the scriptural doctrine of virtual non-existence in the interval between death and resurrection—“That in the last day, *when*
 “*He shall come again*, . . . we may *rise to the*
life immortal!” So says Paul, as we have seen, in 1 Cor. xv. 54, 2 Cor. v. 4, &c., and the various other places which have been considered.

In the very next Collect (that for the Second Sunday in Advent) the same truth is expressed, where we pray that we "may ever hold fast the blessed *hope* of everlasting life," &c. Then, if it be yet the object of hope, it is not in present possession. We are, therefore, not in any sense immortal. The phrase "blessed hope" here is, doubtless, adopted from the language of the Apostle, when speaking of the same hope of the Lord's coming, to which the previous Collect referred, and which is always associated with the putting on of immortality by his people—"Looking for that blessed hope even the appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ."*

In the Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent, it is thus prayed, "that at Thy second coming" (not at our death) "we may be found an acceptable people," &c. This place also omits all allusion to any state of disembodied existence.

The whole Collect for the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany is to our purpose—"O God, whose blessed Son was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and *heirs* of eternal life; grant us, we beseech thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure; that *when* He shall *appear* again with power, and great glory, we may be made *like* unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom," &c. This prayer is evidently founded on the first three verses of 1 John, iii., and is

* Titus, ii. 13.

plainly confirmatory of those which have gone before it. "*Heirs* of eternal life" are not yet in possession of it; nor, if we cannot "be made like unto Him" *till* "He shall appear again with power, and great glory," is it possible that we can "see Him as He is," or be in any sense, or in any degree consciously present with Him, *before* He thus appears, as has been shewn in the remarks made on 1 John, iii. 1-3.

Passing over several intermediate places to the same effect, we come to the Baptismal service, where it is thus prayed for the child just outwardly dedicated to God by the Church, in that ordinance—"that as he is made partaker of the death of thy Son, he may also be partaker of His Resurrection, *so that*,"* finally, with the residue of Thy holy Church, he may be an inheritor of Thine everlasting kingdom," &c. Here the same order of events is observed, as in the other cases; the Resurrection being made to necessarily precede the obtaining of the kingdom, and nothing said, or even hinted, of any kind, or degree, of disembodied existence whatever.

Again, in the Collect which concludes the Burial Service, we pray that, "when we shall depart this life, we may rest† in Him, . . . and that in the General Resurrection in the last day, we may be found

* That is, "so that" by that process of Resurrection, &c.

† The "rest" here spoken of is necessarily the rest of sleep, between death and Resurrection—rest is not expressive of the active enjoyment of glory, in any sense, in the kingdom of God. Of believers in the intermediate condition it is said, "they rest from their

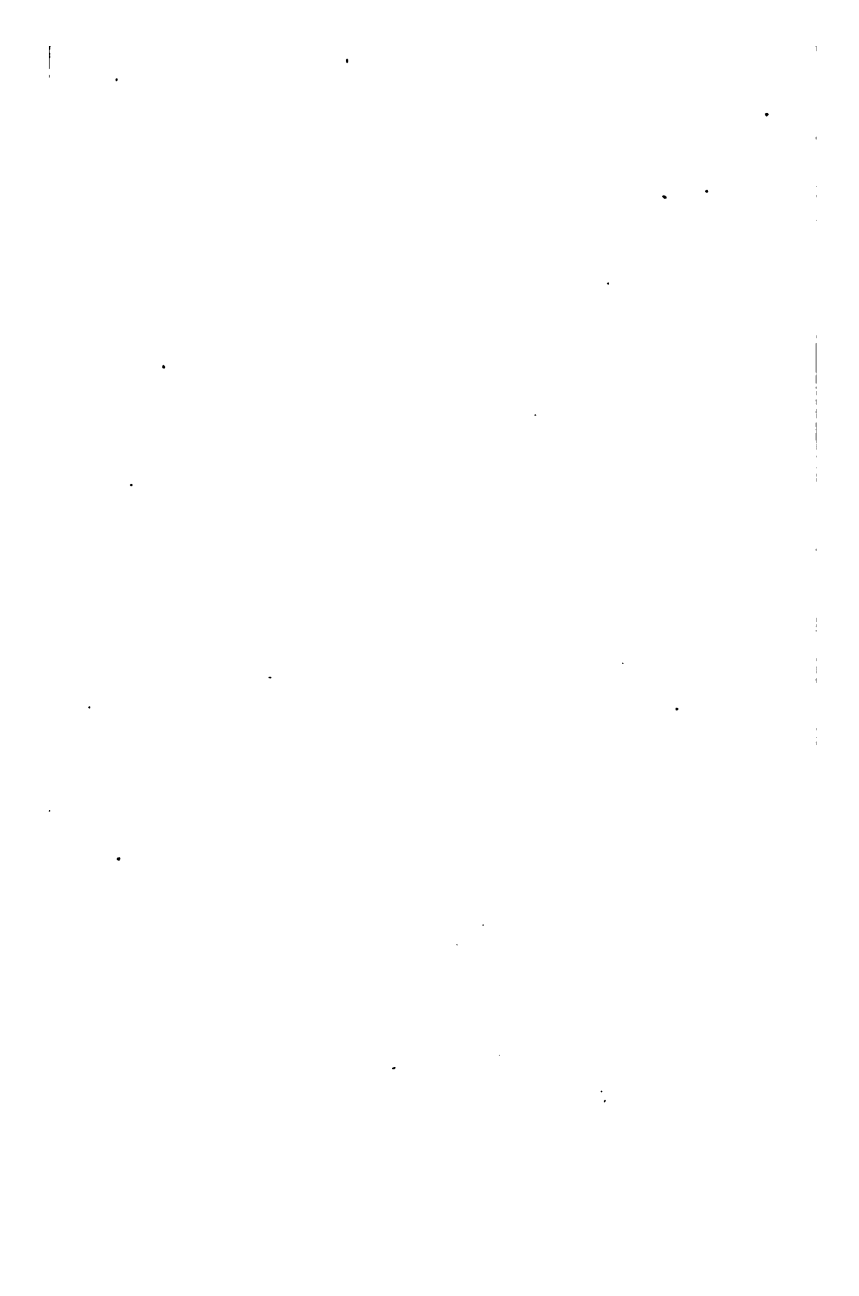
acceptable in Thy sight," &c. Not a word here of any hope connected with the *pre*-resurrection state; but a simple scriptural expression of confidence that, at the Resurrection, the believer shall not only "be found acceptable," (so that he shall not till then be judged), but then, and not before, be introduced to the kingdom of God—according to the rest of the prayer—"and receive that blessing, which thy well-beloved Son shall *then* pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying, come ye blessed children of my Father, *receive the kingdom* prepared for you, from the beginning of the world," &c.

It is conceded, that there are a few passages in the services of the Church—of which we have a sample in the last prayer but one of the Burial Service—which are apparently inconsistent with what we have seen to be the general doctrine of the Church, as well as of the Bible, on the point in hand—"Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity," &c. This is plainly opposed to Scripture, *if* meant to apply to the moment after death—but it is quite possible (and, indeed, would appear far more than merely probable, from what we have just seen of their general teaching on the subject) that the Reformers labours'—but this refers rather, it seems, to those who shall suffer in "the great tribulation" which is to wind up this Dispensation; though verified, (in a *sense*) to all who from the beginning shall have exchanged the trials of the present state for the sleep of the intermediate.

here recognise, as they have plainly done in the places already considered, the utter unconsciousness of the disembodied state, and, in that case, virtually, the immediate passing of believers from the trials of this life, to the glory of the resurrection state, as to their apprehensions it would necessarily be, from their unconsciousness of the lapse of any interval. (See Appendix.)

Should they, however, have here contradicted their own previous teaching, we must remember that Churches are no more possessed of infallibility, than are the individual members of which they are composed—and such inconsistencies as our own may have manifested in this case, as well as in some few others, should lead us to a habit of less dependence on any human authority, in matters of faith; and a more simple, entire, implicit reliance on—as well as diligent, anxious, and prayerful study of—that Word to which alone, of all the books in the world, can be applied Locke's beautiful and just definition—as having “God for its author, salvation for its object, and truth, without *any* admixture of error, for its contents.”—Giving a general assent to the doctrines of any Church, by no means binds to implicit submission to any thing unscriptural which may be propounded by her, in the fallibility which every denomination confesses to belong to even the purest systems, in the present state of imperfection. On the subject now before us the teaching of Scripture is so plain, that he that runs may read, and that of the Church sufficiently so, to shew her general concurrence in the doctrine of the Word of God concerning it. With

these observations we submit what has been said to the candid judgment of the Christian public—trusting that some light may have been thereby thrown on a subject, the due understanding of which is indispensable to the full comprehension of the revealed purposes of God, as regards His people, and their promised inheritance; and that it may be found to furnish a key to the explanation of various difficulties supposed to exist in the Word, but really arising from false views of this very subject.



APPENDIX.

AFTER the writer had concluded the preceding Treatise, his attention was drawn by a friend to an anonymous work entitled "A View of the Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State: laid before his Parishioners, by a Country Pastor,"—and ascribed to the present Archbishop of Dublin,—in which occur the following observations, so entirely in unison with his own views of the Intermediate State, that had he been aware of the existence of the work a little earlier, he would have quoted them in the body of the Essay. Having considered the prevailing view of the subject, he then goes on to say—"The only alternative—the only other possible supposition—is, that the soul remains in a state of profound sleep—of utter unconsciousness—during the whole interval between its separation from the body by death, and its re-union at the resurrection. One objection to the reception of this supposition in the minds, I apprehend, of many persons—an objection which affects the imagination, though not the understanding—is, that it seems as if there were a tedious and dreary interval of non-existence to be passed, by such as should be supposed to sleep, perhaps for some thousands of years, which might elapse between their death and the end of the world. The imagination represents a wearisome length of time during which (on this supposition) those that sleep in Christ would have to wait for His final coming

to reward them. We fancy it hard that they should be lost both to the world and to themselves—destitute of the enjoyments both of this life and of the next, and continuing for so many ages as if they had never been born.

“Such, I say, are the pictures which the *imagination* draws; but when we view things by the light of the *understanding*, they present a very different aspect. Reason tells us (the moment we consider the subject), that a long and a short space of time are exactly the same to a person who is insensible. All our notion of time is drawn from the different impressions on our minds succeeding one another: so that when any one loses his consciousness (as in the case of a fainting fit, or of those recovered from drowning, suffocation, or the like) he not only does not perceive the length of the interval between the loss of his consciousness, and the return of it, but *there is (to him) no such interval*; the moment at which he totally lost his sensibility seems (and is, to him) immediately succeeded by the moment in which he regains it. . . . It will often happen, when any one sleeps very soundly, that the moment of his waking shall appear to him immediately to succeed that of his falling asleep; although the interval may have been many hours. Something of the same kind has been observed in a few instances of madness, and of apoplexy; in which all the ordinary operations of the mind having been completely suspended for several years, the patients, on the recovery of their senses, have been found totally unconscious of the whole interval, and distinctly remembering and speaking of, as having happened on the day before, events which occurred before the seizure; so that they could hardly be brought to believe, that whole years had since elapsed.” (The author of the work here adds in a note—“A case occurred within my own knowledge, not long ago, of a sick person who fell into a kind of trance which lasted several weeks; and immediately on her revival she asked for some grapes, which had been brought into her room just before she became insensible.”)

“From considering such instances as these,” he goes on to say “as well as from the very nature of the case, any one may easily

convince himself, that if ever a total insensibility takes place, so that all action of the mind is completely suspended, the time during which this continues, whether a single minute, or a thousand years, is, to the person himself, *no time at all*. In either case, the moment of his reviving must appear to him immediately to succeed that to his sinking into unconsciousness; nor could he possibly be able to tell afterwards, from his own sensations and recollections, whether his state of suspended animation had lasted an hour, a day, or a century.

“To all practical purposes, that is, to each, a long or a short time, which is such to his perceptions. Some of you may probably have known what it is to pass a night of that excessive restlessness, which accompanies some particular kinds of illness. Such persons will easily remember (what no one else can fully conceive) how insufferably tedious a single night will in such a case appear;—how enormously long the interval seemed to be between the times of the clock’s striking;—how they seemed to feel as if morning would never arrive. And if it has happened that the next night the patient was completely relieved, and slept quite soundly, the very same number of hours, which the night before had seemed to him an age, would appear but a moment. The clock, indeed, he is well aware, has made the same movements in the one case as in the other; but relatively to the sick man himself, and as far as his feelings are concerned, the one night will have been immensely shorter than the other.

“The long and dreary interval, then, between death and the Day of Judgment (supposing the intermediate state to be a profound sleep), *does not exist at all, except in the imagination*. To the party concerned there is *no interval whatever*; but to each person (according to this supposition) the moment of his closing his eyes in death, will be *instantly* succeeded by the sound of the last trumpet, which shall summon the dead; even though ages shall have intervened. And in this sense the faithful Christian may be, practically, in paradise the day he dies. The promise made to the penitent thief, and the Apostle Paul’s wish ‘to depart,

and to be with Christ,' which he said, was 'far better' than to remain any longer in this troublesome world, would each be fulfilled to all practical purposes, provided each shall have found himself in a state of happiness in the presence of his Lord, the very instant (according to his own perception) after having breathed his last in this world."

The above extract is given, not as the whole of the argument of the author of the work from which it is taken, on the subject of the Intermediate state, but merely so far as corroborative of the views maintained in the preceding Treatise, as to the unconsciousness of that condition, by explaining some of the difficulties supposed to lie in the way of thus believing.

THE END.

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